

LAST MONTH'S
AVERAGE DAILY SALE
434,000
No 63,625

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9 1990

Politburo to be abolished says Moscow

Gorbachov moves to control bureaucracy

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow

The Soviet Communist Party's ruling Politburo, which since Stalin's day has been the most powerful group in the Soviet Union, is to be abolished in an attempt to turn the party's power structure on its head.

The creation of a bigger body, known as the party presidium, was approved by the Central Committee meeting which decided not to hinder progress towards a multi-party system. But a move to reduce the membership of the Central Committee was rejected.

The abolition of the Politburo was announced by Mr Ivan Frolov, the editor of *Pravda* who chairs the editorial commission finalizing the plenum documents - including the draft platform enshrining the party's new policy, 'Towards Human Democratic Socialism'.

Mr Frolov also disclosed

that proposals to slim down the Central Committee to about 200 members had been rejected. It had nearly 500 members until last April, and would in future comprise three or four hundred people, he said.

The Central Committee Secretariat is to be revamped, with each secretary taking administrative responsibility for an area of policy and a small specialist staff.

Mr Frolov said the new structure was an attempt by the leadership and the Central Committee to reassert control

Mr Yeltsin - one of Mr Gorbachov's most strident critics - had raised his hand in the only dissenting vote. Mr Gorbachov had quipped: "I do not know why he is voting against, but I dare say we will soon find out from other sources" - a reference to Mr Yeltsin's willingness to talk to the foreign press.

In an interview for American television, Mr Yeltsin was reported as saying that his vote was an expression of protest against the leaders on bloc - with the exception of Mr Gorbachov.

Outside the Central Committee, however, Mr Yeltsin was far from being alone in his disappointment with plans to drop the party's monopoly and permit the emergence of non-communist parties.

While the West was hailing another historic change in Soviet society, the Soviet public was decidedly less impressed. Viewers who saw excerpts from Mr Aleksandr Yakovlev's press conference on *Good Morning Moscow*, the capital's breakfast television show, found his low-key presentation and intellectual manner unconvincing.

Moscow Radio canvassed opinion in the capital and received a similar response: disappointment mingled with frustration. "Half-hearted", "too many compromises", and "vague and ill thought-out" were some of the comments. "I wish Gorbachov would march forward with a reform banner in his hand, then we would happily follow... as it is, we still don't know where he stands," was a reaction from one taxi driver.

Only Central Committee members have seen the final draft of party's platform and it will probably not be published until the weekend, but Mr Gorbachov's proposals for a multi-party system have not brought Moscowites rallying.

Mr Frolov added that when

over the labyrinth of departments and sub-departments which make up the party bureaucracy. It wanted, he said, to turn the power structure "on its head".

Attempts to cut the bureaucracy in the past two years have resulted in nothing more dramatic than a redistribution of largely superfluous staff, and many feel that the apparatus, not the leadership, is obstructing change.

Another purpose of the restructuring appears to be to tie the leading organs of power more closely to the lower levels of the party. It is proposed that the new presidium will count among its members the party leaders in the 15 republics - or 14 if the Lithuania stands by its decision to break with Moscow.

Mr Frolov, who is regarded as a close associate of Mr Gorbachov, also gave insight into the general secretary's way of working. He said the draft party platform had been formulated almost entirely by Mr Gorbachov. Nor could it, Mr Frolov said, have been written "with one left hand and one right hand", as Mr Boris Yeltsin claimed, because the Soviet leader dictated all his documents.

Mr Frolov added that when

Guides in row over scouting for girls



Dr June Paterson-Brown, Chief Commissioner of the Girl Guides, between statues of Lord Baden-Powell and Lady Olave Baden-Powell yesterday.

Human embryo research

Peers defeat ban move

By Sheila Gunn, Political Reporter

Pro-life peers suffered a serious blow last night when the House of Lords voted nearly three to one in favour of continuing research on human embryos up to 14 days old.

In a key vote on the Warnock legislation, an amendment by the Duke of Norfolk, England's premier Roman Catholic peer, to ban all research was rejected by 234 votes to 80.

In rejecting the amendment, the House of Lords sent a clear signal to MPs, who will vote on the issue in the spring, that it would be wrong to ban research which has helped thousands of childless couples and could provide cures for genetic and other diseases. Peers have yet to decide on what conditions to impose.

In a free vote after a two-and-a-half-hour debate, Lady Hooper, Under Secretary of State for Health and a Roman Catholic, the Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, and the Bishop of Winchester,

the Right Rev Colin James, voted in favour of a ban.

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, spoke in favour of allowing the research under strict conditions, as did most front bench peers. Lord Mackay of Clashfern, Lord Chancellor, who summed up the debate, abstained.

Lady Warnock, whose report in 1984 formed the basis of the human fertilization and embryology Bill, said: "It was a bigger majority than I had expected. I hope the House of Commons will be influenced by the size of it."

Lady Warnock, who did not speak in the debate, was also pleased that the abortion issue had been kept away from the Bill in the House of Lords, although the Government has promised to allow all debates on abortion amendments in the Commons. Unlike peers, MPs will have to consider

intense lobbying by Roman Catholic and other pro-life constituents. If the Commons votes for a total ban, peers will have to decide whether to bow to the decision or try to defy the Commons.

The Government had given the peers the choice of either banning all research or allowing it up to 14 days.

Dr Leonard said legalizing research would be "a slippery slope". However, Dr Habgood dismissed what he termed the "horrible picture of fiendish doctors experimenting on poor screaming embryos".

The Duke of Norfolk said a Gallup poll showed a majority was in favour of a ban. No genetic disease had so far been identified or cured by experiments on human embryos.

Mrs Phyllis Bowman, national director of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, said: "We have always known our strength in the Lords in no way compares with that in the Commons."

80 years on, a bastion crumbles

By Alan Hamilton

The Girl Guides were less than ecstatic yesterday at the news that their brother organization, the Scout Association, is after 80 years, to open its tents to females.

Announcing the fall of another male bastion in the same week that the Royal Navy decided to allow Wrens to go to sea, the association said it was bowing to demand from girls who envied the boys their more adventurous outdoor activities. The association admitted that the boys would not necessarily like it. The decision on whether to mix the sexes would be for individual scout troops.

"We are aware that in some places there is a pressing need for it and we are anxious to meet that need," Mr Garth Morrison, the Chief Scout, said yesterday. Scout Association officials denied that they were out to raid the Guides' superior membership figures, currently 733,000 compared with the Scouts' 680,000.

"We cannot see how we can

be accused of that," a Scout Association spokesman said. "It is simply that there are a lot of girls who want to be Scouts rather than Guides."

None the less the news was received with "extreme disappointment" by Dr June Paterson-Brown, Chief Commissioner of the Girl Guides Association, especially as it comes at the end of a two-year joint working party which

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examined a number of possible avenues of closer co-operation between the two organizations.

"This decision has come at the wrong time, they have gone too far too soon. They are also out of step, youth services in general have gone full circle and now generally tend to favour single-sex activity again," Dr Paterson-Brown said.

The Guides hinted strongly that they would be increasing

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TOMORROW

The Church militants

● After decades of suppression, the Russian Orthodox Church is feeling the benefits of perestroika, wielding social and political influence in a country in which, ironically, it still has no official status. Tomorrow, we examine the regeneration of faith in Russia

INSIDE

Portfolio PLATINUM

● There were no winners of yesterday's £2,000 Portfolio Platinum prize, which therefore accumulates to £4,000. Today's chance to win is on page 27

Attack case man in court

By David Sapeid

An unemployed labourer, Russell Bishop, aged 23, of Lewes Road, Brighton, was remanded in custody by Brighton magistrates yesterday, accused of the attempted murder, kidnap and indecent assault of a seven-year-old girl last weekend.

Mr Bishop was remanded in custody until February 15 but he will not have to appear until next month. There was no bail application and he was granted legal aid. Reporting restrictions were not lifted.

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Nato offers new military cutback

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

As Mr James Baker, the US Secretary of State, began crucial disarmament talks in a Moscow mansion yesterday, Nato presented new proposals for cutting back on troops and armaments in Europe.

Mr Baker spent his first day of talks with Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, trying to iron out major obstacles in the strategic arms and chemical weapons negotiations.

But he also sought reaction to President Bush's recent proposal to limit Soviet and American troops in central Europe to 195,000.

This proposal was included in the new measures tabled by Nato in Vienna yesterday at the Conventional Forces in Europe talks. Nato offered the Warsaw Pact new concessions on tanks, aircraft, helicopters and armoured troop carriers.

The concessions were well

received by some of the Warsaw Pact countries.

Diplomatic sources said that Hungary and Czechoslovakia welcomed the proposal to limit superpower forces to 195,000.

The meeting between Mr Baker and Mr Shevardnadze

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in the Moscow mansion, which continues today, will be followed up next week when both men fly to Ottawa to attend the start of a three-week conference on President Bush's Open Skies proposal, under which Nato and Warsaw Pact countries would be allowed to fly military surveillance aircraft over each others' territories as a confidence boosting measure.

Offer details, page 6

Record BT profits attacked

By Graham Seargeant, Financial Editor

Profits of British Telecom, which vies with BP as Britain's largest company by profits, reached a new record of more than £2 billion before tax for the nine months to end December, 7.8 per cent higher than a year ago.

The 3.2 per cent average rise in regulated prices, mainly on exchange lines, imposed in September helped turnover and profits accelerate in the final quarter of 1989.

BT raised capital spending over the period by 13.7 per cent to £2.28 billion and has now converted a third of all customers' lines onto digital telephone exchanges.

But the profits, which amounted to 22 per cent of BT's £9 billion turnover, were quickly criticized by several Labour MPs.

Full story, page 21

Move to speed victims' payment

By Quentin Cowdry, Home Affairs Correspondent

The Home Office seemed poised last night to agree an immediate increase in staffing at the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board after the organization was bitterly criticized by MPs.

A call for the government-funded board, which compensates victims of violent crime, to receive 60 extra staff would receive "urgent consideration", the department said.

A report published yesterday by the all-party Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs said it was unacceptable that three-quarters of victims had to wait over a year for a decision.

Staffing levels had failed to keep pace with rapid increases in workload, and the board had sunk into a "bureaucratic nightmare", the MPs said. About 100,000 claims were outstanding and the backlog was rising.

Sir John Wheeler, the committee chairman, described as trivial the amount of money needed to speed up payments. "Every qualifying victim of violence should... be encouraged to apply and should be sure that his or her claim will be dealt with within a reasonable time - we set the modest target of a year."

Lord Carlisle of Bucklow, the board's chairman and a former Conservative Cabinet minister, said that in the past funding and staff increases had "never come on time".

The Home Office claimed the scheme, allowing compensation of £750 or more, was the "most generous of its kind in the world". But it said MPs had been right to draw attention to delays.

Sad winter's tale as RSC brings curtains down

By Simon Tait, Arts Correspondent



In a desperate move to ensure survival in the face of a spiralling deficit, the Royal Shakespeare Company is to close its two London theatres next winter. The closure should be seen as the biggest manifestation of the crisis in arts funding so far, said Mr Terry Hands, the company's artistic director.

The company faces an accumulating deficit of £2.9 million by March 1991, and the alternative to closing the Barbican and Pit theatres in the Barbican Centre from November 5 until March 18 would be "total closure", Mr Hands said yesterday. "We could not save the sum we have to save any other way," he said.

He was speaking from the Barbican Theatre stage where, ironically, the RSC

is currently enjoying unprecedented success at the Barbican with *A Clockwork Orange*, which opened this week and is sold out. So are *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Show Boat* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford, due to open next week, has 88 per cent of seats sold. The RSC earns £1 million a year from the success of its *Les Misérables* production, and is negotiating new sponsorship with Royal Insurance.

Mr Hands is due to leave the RSC next year, and his successor is expected to be announced next week. "This is a watershed on a double front. I have to keep as much of the fabric intact as I can for the succession to choose the company's path, and I have to bring the deficit spiral to a halt."

The closure is expected to save £1.3 million, but a deficit of nearly £1.7 million will remain. Because of this, the winter programme including a new musical for Christmas, *Children of Eden*, and as yet unscheduled new plays for The Pit going "back to the drawing-board".

No redundancies are planned but 65 to 70 London stage staff will take a 50 per cent pay cut.

The RSC has written to the Government asking it to meet funding levels recommended in a 1984 Cabinet Office paper.

● The English National Ballet has appointed a stand-in artistic director after the dismissal last week of Mr Peter Schaufuss. She is Miss Elizabeth Anderton, previously his assistant.

'The master has not lost his touch'

DAILY MAIL

FREDERICK FORSYTH

HIS NEW NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER

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FREDERICK FORSYTH

THE MASTERSTORYTELLER'S EXPLOSIVE NEW NOVEL

THE NEGOTIATOR

Out now in Corgi paperback at WHSMITH

NEWS ROUNDUP

Setback for care home campaign

Mrs Virginia Bottomley, Minister of State, Department of Health, dealt a double blow yesterday to supporters of attempts to tighten legislation controlling the ownership of residential care homes for the elderly.

She ruled out legislation requiring owners to register with their local authority and refused to consider giving the police power to pass on information on prospective owners. Both measures had been included in an amendment to the NHS and Community Care Bill being considered by a House of Commons standing committee.

To placate mounting pressure from all sides of the House she agreed to reconsider improvements. She did not want to burden small businesses with unnecessary bureaucracy in spite of evidence that people with criminal records, and barred from running homes under the Registered Homes Act 1986, were back in business because of a legal loophole. Homes which care for up to three people do not have to be registered or inspected and an increasing number of owners get round the law by caring for only three people.

Child care tax help

Working mothers could be offered extra help with child care as a result of plans being considered by the Conservative party (Nicholas Wood writes). Employers would be encouraged to give staff vouchers which could be cashed at nurseries of their choice and the Government would exempt the perk from income tax.

The tax exemption could be included in the Budget, although it seems likely to be adopted later. The move follows concern about labour shortages and pressure on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to stop taxing nurseries.

New 999 protest call

Leaders of the ambulance unions are today likely to call for further mass demonstrations of support when they meet to discuss the deadlocked 22-week-old dispute (Tim Jones writes). Union chiefs are hoping they can embarrass Mr Kenneth Clarke, Secretary of State for Health, back to the negotiating table. Some London shop stewards who yesterday suggested opening up local pay negotiations as a way of resolving the dispute were heavily outvoted.

Victim wins £6,000

A man who claimed he was beaten up by vice squad officers was yesterday awarded nearly £6,000 by a high court. A jury in Leeds agreed that Mr Glendon Spencer, a Rastafarian aged 34, was subjected to unreasonable force when arrested outside a drinking club. Mr Spencer, of Hovingham Mount, Leeds, had sued West Yorkshire Police for wrongful imprisonment, malicious prosecution and unlawful violence after the incident in 1985.

Noriega assets frozen

A High Court judge yesterday ordered the freezing of assets held in British bank accounts by General Noriega on behalf of American investigators trying to trace profits from alleged drug trafficking by the former Panamanian leader (Stewart Trender writes). General Noriega is in Florida awaiting trial for drug offences, while the Americans have tried to track down his assets in several countries including Britain, Switzerland, Luxembourg and France.

Heddie remembered

A memorial service for Mr John Heddie, the MP for Mid Staffordshire found dead in his car in December, heard yesterday that he was haunted by a "fear of failure". His Conservative colleague and friend, Mr David Lightbown, MP for neighbouring South East Staffordshire, told the congregation at Lichfield Cathedral: "He wasn't a perfect man, but on the scales of decency and justice he will always be known as a kind man." The inquest reopened on Thursday.

Cartilage 'listening' device is top invention

A computerised machine capable of "listening" for torn cartilages in knees won first prize in the Design Council-inspired Toshiba Year of Invention Awards yesterday.

The machine, which also took first prize in the university and college section, was designed by a team from Queen's University, Belfast, led by Dr Gavin Tait.

Third prize in the schools section went to Richard Len-

ane, aged 17, of St Malachy's College, Belfast, for a whistle which, when inserted in a car exhaust, emits a shrieking sound if the vehicle is stolen.

An automatic wrapping machine for bales of cattle feed silage, designed by David Fisher, aged 16, of Andleem, Cheshire, won first prize in the second prize went to Jeremy Tapp, aged 17, of Brighams, Devon, for an all-weather sail board harness.

Universities will offer to run loan scheme

By Douglas Broom
Education Reporter

The universities are to offer to take over the Government's student loan scheme in return for concessions over the way it is to be run.

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals meets today to finalise the offer which it believes will prove attractive to ministers after the decision by the high street banks to pull out of the scheme.

It will tell the Government that it could save substantial sums of public money by winding up the Glasgow-based Student Loans Company and handing over administration of the scheme to universities, polytechnics and colleges.

The proposal, which has yet to be discussed with polytechnic directors, will be put to Mr John

MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education and Science, who has invited university heads to a meeting later this month. The vice-chancellors believe the Government is open to persuasion because the scheme has proved universally unpopular in its existing form.

In return for assuming responsibility for student loans, the vice-chancellors are seeking big concessions on the shape of the system. In particular they want the Government to move at once to its ultimate goal of replacing grants with loans, a step which would mean abandoning the interim "top-up" formula due to begin in September.

Under the existing scheme, from September students will be able to borrow £420 a year (£460 if they study in London). At the same time the value of the student grant is to be

frozen at £2,265 a year (£2,845 in London). The size of loan offered is due to be increased steadily until loan and grant account for equal proportions of student financial support by the end of the century.

The vice-chancellors want the means-tested grant scrapped and replaced with a larger value loan to which all students would be entitled. This would be repaid through the personal tax system.

The high street banks, which walked out of talks with ministers on the scheme just before Christmas, had been offered a £12-a-head administration fee for handling payment and collection.

However the universities, which already have staff for distributing local authority grant cheques to students, argue that they could do the job for much less. Under the

scheme, the Treasury would pay money for student loans directly to the universities as part of their annual block grant.

New funding arrangements, to be introduced from next year, link the payment of government grants to universities to their ability to recruit students, so it would be comparatively easy to allocate loan funds.

While they too will seek administration fees, the vice-chancellors believe the cost could be met by the savings the Treasury will make from stopping social security benefits to full-time students from this autumn.

However Mr Robert Jackson, under-secretary of state for education, told the Commons committee scrutinizing the Student Loans Bill that, while the scheme would cost £178 million in the first year, savings would only amount to

£68 million. Mr Jack Straw, Labour education spokesman, said last night: "The vice-chancellors have been snubbed by the Government before on the issue of a graduate tax."

"I do not think the vice-chancellors will be any more popular at Downing Street than were the banks."

● An extra £4 million will be made available from April to boost the number of computers in primary schools, Mr Alan Howarth, under-secretary of state for education, said yesterday. There were already an average of 30 microcomputers in every secondary school and three in every primary school, he said.

● Berkshire is to offer incentive bonuses to supply teachers in order to boost the number of staff available to cover for teachers absent through sickness or on courses.

Stevens set to wind up collusion investigation

By Edward Gorman, Irish Affairs Correspondent

Mr John Stevens, the Deputy Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire, is hoping to "guilt-trip" his inquiry into collusion in Northern Ireland by the end of next month, according to police sources.

Mr Stevens is said to have decided to finish his investigations unless he encounters intervening events of extraordinary significance. His report into allegations of collusion between members of the security forces and Protestant paramilitary groups is expected to be delivered to Mr Hugh Acheson, the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, at about the same time.

Mr Stevens will then close the inquiry's headquarters at Antrim Road police station, Belfast, and hand any outstanding lines of inquiry to the RUC as his detectives return to the mainland.

Mr Stevens' decision comes after recent publicity stunts by "loyalist" paramilitaries aimed at bogging the investigation down in Northern Ireland, and he is said to be prepared for further demonstrations of defiance.

Officers originally hoped to bring their activities to an end by the end of January, but events have forced them to reassess the timetable.

The decision also underlines the belief among the Stevens team that the report, the analysis of the problem, and the recommendations which flow from it, are as important as bringing large numbers of offenders before the courts.

To date, the inquiry has resulted in 48 people being charged with offences including possessing, collecting or withholding information likely to be of use to terrorists.

The political spotlight and the untimely fire at the orig-

Step nearer for Prince's volunteers



The Prince of Wales with Senator Collor de Mello, president-elect of Brazil, who is on a world tour, in London yesterday.

By David Walker
Public Administration Correspondent

A plan by the Prince of Wales to enlist young people in a national programme of voluntary work drew a step nearer yesterday with the publication by The Prince's Trust of the first practical details of the £100 million-a-year scheme.

One in seven aged between 16 and 24 would join Young Volunteers in the Community by 2000. Working away from home in "placements" of up to 18 weeks, they would mix with young people from other backgrounds and together develop a sense of common citizenship, the trust says.

Placements might include taking part in sport or outdoor activities and participants, both employed and un-

employed, would receive a certificate. The trust is at present negotiating with the Department of Social Security and of Employment, as well as with the Home Secretary. It wants Cabinet approval for relaxation on the rule requiring un-employed youth to show they are actively seeking work before qualifying for social security so that participation in Young Volunteers in the Community would not make them financially worse off.

Mr Tom Shebbear, director of the trust, emphasized yesterday that the scheme fitted closely with government ideas about wealth creation by promoting self-reliance, which was, he said, at the heart of the enterprise culture.

The Prince of Wales, together with Mr Bernard

Weatherhill, Speaker of the House of Commons, are to launch the scheme at St James's Palace in April. The Speaker is patron of the Commission on Citizenship, which has been collaborating on the plan.

The scheme, on an initial budget of £2.6 million paid for by Whitehall and private sponsors, aims to attract 7,000 volunteers within two years for placements offered by local voluntary groups or the Government's Training and Enterprise Councils.

Sir John Cassels, former director of the Manpower Services Commission, has been working with the trust to align the scheme with existing programmes for young people. He said, however, there would not be a formal training element in the Prince's programme, which would build up to take 100,000 people a year.

Placements are not intended to take work away from local authority staff, and trade union agreement is being sought.

However, the scheme has been criticized by Community Service Volunteers (CSV), one of the largest youth volunteer groups. Mrs Elizabeth Hoodless, executive director of CSV, said there was a "lack of realism" in the plan and asked what incentives would be built in to the scheme to ensure employers released young employees to take part.

Young Volunteers in the Community: A consultation paper (The Prince's Trust, 8 Bedford Row, London, WC1R 0BA).

Lawyers and MPs tackle the changing face of British broadcasting

Court cases should be shown on television, say barristers

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Court cases in England and Wales should be televised as an experiment, the Bar Council said yesterday.

It called for pilot projects covering civil and criminal proceedings and tribunals, but not cases involving divorce or children.

The council is to table amendments to the Broadcasting Bill which would allow the experiments, funded by television companies, to go ahead. Mr Roger Henderson, QC, chairman of the council's public affairs committee, said: "Our belief is that it would be of great benefit to open justice and generally increase our understanding of how far the courts work."

There would be strict rules covering what could be filmed, with no shots, for example, of jurors, rape victims or witnesses whose iden-

tity was protected by law. Editing would be at the discretion of news organizations.

Cases would be recorded under a pooling arrangement with videotapes being made available to any broadcaster that wanted to use them.

The Bar's amendment comes in the wake of a working party report backing an experiment. The legal profession is split on the merits of televising the courts, but Mr Henderson said no-one opposed a pilot scheme.

Mr Jonathan Caplan, who chaired the working party, said he did not believe the move would encourage lawyers and judges to "act up" to the cameras, partly because live coverage would be the exception - with most broadcasts involving recorded material, and partly because the judge would have the power to

exclude the cameras if someone sought to abuse them.

Mr Caplan said that allowing cameras in would improve public access to court proceedings. At present, people relied on press reports or broadcasts from outside the court building, even though the courts were open to the public.

"It would enhance the public's understanding of and confidence in our legal system, the judiciary and the decisions of our courts," he said.

A spokesman for the Lord Chancellor - who would be instrumental in any government decision to allow a change in the law - said yesterday: "The Government will have to weigh the proposed benefit against the disadvantages of extra stress on witnesses; the intrusion that might be caused and whole the question of cost."

Programme-making firms win guarantee of quality

By Richard Evans and Richard Ford

BBC and ITV will have to commission a quarter of their best and most expensive programming, rather than just cheap games shows and sports coverage, from Britain's blossoming independent sector.

Until now the 25 per cent provision for independents has referred to allocation of time, and independent companies feared the 2,500 hours of programme-making commissioned from them would involve expensive programming on the fringe of TV schedules.

An amendment to the Broadcasting Bill successfully moved last night by Mr David Mellor, Minister of State at the Home Office, will mean the range of programmes will be "in terms of cost of acquisition as well as in terms of the types of programme involved". The stipulation is

intended to guarantee that quality programmes flourish in the 1990s, the Home Office said last night.

Mr Paul Styles, director of the Independent Programme Producers' Association, said: "The minister is now saying he wants independents to be paid to make programmes of all types, which will include prime time and expensive programming."

Mr David Shaw, director of the ITV Association, said: "We have no problem with this amendment. It reflects what ITV companies are already doing. If anything, they have been commissioning from independents a greater slice of expensive programming."

Further measures to guarantee the quality of independent television programmes may be incorporated in the Broadcasting Bill, MPs were told yesterday.

Mr Mellor said he and colleagues would consider making it explicit in the legislation that independent television franchises could go to makers of outstanding programmes rather than to the highest bidder.

He also told the Commons committee studying the Bill that he was considering changing the Bill to insist upon bidders providing programmes of high quality across the whole range of schedules.

At present, it requires only that they provide a "suitable proportion" of high-quality programme.

Mr Mark Fisher, Opposition spokesman on the arts, said: "We look for the minister to deliver on his commitment rather than mere words."

Conspirators jailed

'Army of dishonest staff' stole at Ford

By Ronald Faux

Members of a team which conspired to steal car parts worth £4 million from the Ford plant at Halewood, Merseyside, were jailed for up to four years by Liverpool Crown Court yesterday.

Judge Ebsworth said that for three years until the autumn of 1988 there had been an army of dishonest employees stealing parts from the Halewood production line.

The volume of the thefts could not be assessed with any accuracy, he said. But it was clear there had been an extensive network of people geared to receive and pass on the stolen parts to apparently legitimate businesses.

"It is also clear that those engaged in Liverpool will have received substantial sums of money by way of payment, though it is a remarkable feature of this case that at the end of the day no one seems to have any identifiable assets left."

Judge Ebsworth said production line workers at Halewood had taped the stolen car parts to their bodies or clothing and walked out of the Halewood plant with them.

Security defects at Halewood and a union-management agreement not to carry out body searches without the employees' consent allowed the large-scale thefts.

Robert James Whyatt, aged 41, a parts dealer, of Billerica, Essex, was sentenced to four years in prison and ordered to pay £25,000 towards prosecution costs for conspiring to handle stolen goods. He had denied the charge.

Ian Paul Ainsworth, aged 36, of Ilfracombe Road, Preston, Lancashire, a parts dealer, was sentenced to two years.

He admitted being involved in the conspiracy. Brian Taylor, aged 46, of Stockbridge village, Merseyside, was sentenced to two years. He admitted conspiracy.

Robert Kennedy, aged 37, of Liverpool, admitted conspiracy to handle stolen goods and received 180 hours' community service and was ordered to pay £500.

Stephen William Jones, aged 34, a Ford production worker, of Dingle, Liverpool, was jailed for nine months after admitting conspiring to steal parts, his wife Lynn Jones, aged 33, was conditionally discharged for two years for handling stolen goods. She denied the charge.

Robert Crotty, aged 29, of Chadwell Heath, Essex, was jailed for 21 months. He had denied conspiracy. Robert Jones, aged 58, of Stockbridge village, Merseyside, received two years, and Colin Charles Rust, aged 42, of Romford, Essex, 18 months. Both admitted conspiracy.

● The Ford Motor Company said yesterday a review of security at the company's plant was underway and that metal detectors had been installed at the gates at Halewood.

CORRECTION

NEFF (UK) Ltd.: Neff has not "gone bankrupt" as stated in "Britain's lost battle" (Business News, February 7). The company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bosch-Siemens Hausgeräte GmbH and enjoys an excellent reputation as a profitable supplier of kitchen equipment. We apologise to Neff for suggesting otherwise.

Sweet victory in court for British plastic lemon

By Michael Horsnell

The £1.5 million case of the rival plastic lemons ended in victory for the British variety yesterday when the Law Lords ruled against its American competitor.

The makers of Jif lemon juice emerged victorious from a three-year legal fight with its American rival, which wanted to place a look-alike lemon in British supermarkets.

The case brought by Reckitt and Colman, the Norwich-based makers of Jif, against Borden Inc centred on the law of passing off. This prevents a manufacturer from selling a product under the pretence that it is the product of another.

The case, estimated to have run up

legal costs of £1.5 million, has taxed a High Court judge, three Court of Appeal judges and the Law Lords since it was launched in 1987.

The Law Lords dismissed an appeal by Borden against earlier court rulings that Colman, the food division of Reckitt and Colman, had established an exclusive right to the style of its life-size plastic lemons because the public associated such containers specifically with Jif.

Mr Michael Turrell, managing director of Colman, said: "It's a great day for common sense. We have argued throughout this case that the existence of any lemon juice brand in look-alike containers would be confusing to Jif customers and that this should be prevented." Col-

man was granted a High Court injunction banning Borden from marketing its product "in any container so nearly resembling the Jif lemon-shaped container as to be likely to deceive without making clear to the ultimate purchaser that it is not the goods of Colman's". Lord Bridge of Harwich pointed out yesterday that

Law Report... 32 Borden had only to stick a distinctive label on its Reckitt product to distinguish it from Jif.

However, the Law Lords were told that housewives buying plastic lemons in supermarkets did not read labels but simply assumed that whatever they were buying must be

Jif. In effect, Lord Bridge said, Colman had been given a "de facto monopoly" in natural-sized plastic lemons. "A trader selling plastic lemons would never be permitted to register a lemon as his trade mark, but Colmans have achieved the result indirectly that a container designed to look like a real lemon is to be treated, per se, as distinctive of their goods," he said.

He would have liked to avoid this result, but Mr Justice Walton's conclusion could not be faulted in law. He agreed with the other Law Lords in dismissing Borden's appeal.

Lord Jauncey said he did not accept that Colman was being given a monopoly. He said the ruling meant merely that Borden, in seek-

ing to enter the British plastic lemon market, had not taken adequate steps to differentiate its "get-up" from that of Colman so that consumers would not be deceived.

The dispute is the first passing-off case to reach the Law Lords in 10 years and the judgement is regarded as a legal landmark.

Mr Christopher Wadlow, a specialist on the law of passing-off, said: "A lot of businesses involving consumer products are concerned that the get-up or look of their goods has been partially copied. This judgement will encourage them to look again and see if they can do something about it. It is going to make a lot of difference to the way passing-off cases are understood."

£25,000 bank raid trial

Prayer book 'saved security man shot as he tackled robbers'

By David Sapsted

A prayer book saved the life of a security guard shot in the chest at point-blank range as he tackled an armed gang of bank robbers, the Central Criminal Court was told yesterday.

The bullet was deflected by the book in Mr Albert Howard's breast pocket as he grappled with the robbers, the jury was told.

Mr Howard, aged 58, was described in court as "a man of quite exceptional courage" for grabbing one of the robbers inside the bank at Poole in Dorset, and refusing to let go in spite of being attacked by another robber as the fight spilled on to the street. Even after being shot, Mr Howard got up and pursued the fleeing gunman down the road, the court was told.

Mr David Bate, for the prosecution, said Mr Howard had been making a £25,000 delivery for Security Express to the Midland Bank in Manning Heath Road, Poole, when the robbers struck.

Mr Howard was said to have been shot as he struggled with Stephen Kelt, aged 31, of Plaistow, east London, who denies robbery and possessing firearms with intent to endanger life.

Mr Bate said the gun was fired by James Watts, aged 33, from Lambeth, south London, who has admitted taking part in the raid and who will give evidence for the prosecution.

Mr Bate said Mr Kelt, wearing a wig and overalls, had entered the bank with a revolver and thrust it into Mr

Howard's side, ordering him to hand over the money. "But it was Mr Kelt's misfortune to have chosen in Mr Howard a man of quite exceptional courage," Mr Bate said.

The guard knocked the loaded gun aside and managed to get Mr Kelt in a headlock, punching him several times in the face until the pair staggered on to the bank's forecourt, still fighting, the court was told.

Watts rushed to the aid of his accomplice, smashing his own gun on to Mr Howard's

● Mr Howard is a man of quite exceptional courage ●

head and kicking him. "But Mr Howard would not let go," Mr Bate said.

Watts then fired at Mr Howard's chest and Mr Kelt struggled free before jumping into the getaway car.

The bullet from the .45 revolver went through a diary, but was deflected by the prayer book. Mr Howard was left bruised and with minor burns, but otherwise unharmed.

Mr Bate said: "The bullet, having gone through Mr Howard's chest, hit the photograph of the hands in prayer on the cover and ricocheted off. You have some idea of how perilously close Mr Howard came to losing his life."

Counsel then read the guard's favourite prayer: "God grant me the serenity to

accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Mr Bate went on to describe how Mr Howard chased the gunman along the road, giving up only when Mr Kelt drove the Ford Sierra at him.

"Mr Howard heard the screech of the car's tyres and moved on to the pavement. The car just brushed his leg. If he had not moved, the Sierra would have hit him."

Mr Bate said the gang had used two stolen cars to travel to Poole. Both Watts and Mr Kelt were carrying loaded revolvers while a third man, Charles O'Keefe, acted as the driver. They used the home of Mr O'Keefe's sister in Parkstone, Bournemouth, to hide in and change their clothes after the raid, he said.

The gang expected a £25,000 haul from the robbery, but got away with only £2,000 and some travellers' cheques, the jury was told.

After the raid, Mr O'Keefe's sister drove the three men to different railway stations so they could make their way back to London, and was paid £200 for her help, Mr Bate said.

Mr Kelt was later identified by a bank customer because of his distinctive, protruding front teeth.

Mr O'Keefe, aged 45, from Stockwell, south London, denies robbery and firearms charges. Three other men in the dock deny four other robberies.

The case continues today.

Crufts dog owner faced intimidation threat



Dr Roger Magford, an animal behaviourist, looks over a Japanese Akita called Tonto, on his "psychiatrist's couch" at Crufts yesterday.

By Ruth Gledhill

A champion dog owner who is due to show at Crufts this year said she had almost pulled out because of intimidation and threats of sabotage.

Mrs Carol Fox, owner of a champion Samoyed, said she had received anonymous telephone calls demanding that she step out of the show ring.

Mrs Fox said she was so frightened by the calls that she stopped showing Zamoski Lucky Star of Ostyak in the summer. But she is now determined to fight back and will be showing the dog at Crufts in London on Sunday.

Mrs Fox, whose dog was the working group champion at the show in 1988, said the calls

"threatened the life of the dog and myself if I did not get him out of the ring."

"I will not give in to these people, I will show the dog. I will have someone guarding him, looking at him all the time."

Mrs Sharp-Bale, whose Keeshond won the champion bitch certificate in her breed, said she had received threats some time ago. A letter pasted up from newspaper cuttings had threatened "curtains for your dog" if it is shown again. "I have had a dog poisoned at a show. There is no money attached to dog showing but there is prestige."

Major-General Martin Sinnott, secretary of the Kennel Club, said there had been two

dog doping incidents at Crufts in recent years but they were rare. "Most people are here to show their dogs and they applaud generously those who win."

● In-breeding can make dogs aggressive or nervous, Dr Roger Magford, an animal behaviourist, said yesterday. He said dogs could be "straightened out" on a psychiatrist's couch at Crufts.

Best of Breeds

TOY GROUP: Affenpinscher: Tansy; American Pit Bull Terrier: Tansy; Boston Terrier: Tansy; Bull Terrier: Tansy; Chihuahua: Tansy; Dalmatian: Tansy; English Bulldog: Tansy; French Bulldog: Tansy; German Shepherd: Tansy; Golden Retriever: Tansy; Labrador Retriever: Tansy; Manchester Terrier: Tansy; Miniature Pinscher: Tansy; Papillon: Tansy; Pomeranian: Tansy; Portuguese Water Dog: Tansy; Rat Terrier: Tansy; Shetland Sheepdog: Tansy; Silky Terrier: Tansy; Smooth Fox Terrier: Tansy; Standard Poodle: Tansy; Toy Poodle: Tansy; Welsh Corgi: Tansy; West Highland White Terrier: Tansy; Yorkshire Terrier: Tansy.

Great Dane: Tansy; Irish Wolfhound: Tansy; Mastiff: Tansy; Newfoundlander: Tansy; Old English Sheepdog: Tansy; Otterhound: Tansy; Saint Bernard: Tansy; Scottish Deerhound: Tansy; Scottish Terrier: Tansy; Sheltie: Tansy; Skye Terrier: Tansy; Staff Bull Terrier: Tansy; Toller: Tansy; Weimaraner: Tansy; Wire Fox Terrier: Tansy; Wire-haired Vitcher: Tansy; Xoloitzcuintli: Tansy; Zouzo: Tansy.

£1,000 fine for untethered dog

The skipper of a Russian factory ship was fined £1,000 yesterday after he admitted allowing a dog to run free on his vessel in contravention of the Rabies Order (Kerry Gill writes).

Alexander Bazarov, aged 21, appeared at Dingwall Sheriff Court which was told that the offence took place while his trawler Pinagory was moored in Loch Broom, near Ullapool, on January 18.

Bazarov had failed to declare that the dog was on board, but when the ship was checked it was seen running around the crew's quarters.

Sweden releases terrorist's clothing

By Mark Semster

The Swedish Government allowed a further batch of clothing belonging to a convicted terrorist to be sent yesterday to Scottish police investigating the Lockerbie air disaster.

The clothing, which the police believe was bought in Malta by Mohammed Abu Talb, may hold clues linking him with the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 in December 1988.

Abu Talb, aged 37, has been named formally by the police as a suspect "in the murder and participation in the murder of 270 people". He was jailed for life in December for a bombing campaign in Denmark and The Netherlands.

Mr Ulf Forsberg, the Swedish prosecutor, said the clothing, including trousers, a jacket and a suit, was considered "of significance" by the inquiry team in Scotland.

Forensic work has established that the Semtex bomb which blew up the Pan Am Boeing 747 had been placed in a Samsonite suitcase next to items of clothing manufactured in Malta and sold there on November 23, 1988. Evidence, in the form of a landing card, suggests Abu Talb was probably in Malta at that time.

He has denied any involvement in the bombing.

PORTFOLIO

There were no valid claims in yesterday's Portfolio Platinum competition. The prize money today is doled to £4,000.

The Guinness affair

Former director must repay £5.2m

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Guinness is entitled to immediate repayment of the £5.2 million it paid to Mr Thomas Ward, a former director, for his services in the Distillers takeover battle, the House of Lords ruled yesterday.

Five law lords unanimously dismissed an appeal by the American attorney, who is fighting extradition to the United Kingdom to face criminal charges in the Guinness affair, and said the company's claim for its £5.2 million was "unanswerable".

Mr Ward's case was that the fee was for "advice and services" he provided during the Guinness bid for Distillers.

He claimed credit for persuading the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to allow the Guinness bid, for

Law Report 32

convincing some directors that they should persevere and for persuading Distillers to pay Guinness's costs if the bid was unsuccessful.

However, Lord Templeman judged yesterday that the contract on which Mr Ward relied was "non-existent".

"Mr Ward had no right to remuneration without the authority of the board," he said. He said that even if Mr Ward had acted "honestly and reasonably" in accepting the money without board authority, he could not be excused from paying it back.

Mr Ward was seeking to overturn a Court of Appeal ruling in May 1988 that Guinness was entitled to immediate repayment on the ground that it was un-

authorized by the company's board or its articles.

The Court of Appeal judges also upheld a ruling of the Vice-Chancellor, Sir Nicolas Browne-Wilkinson, that Guinness was entitled to summary judgement without a full trial of Mr Ward's contentions that he was entitled to some or all of the money.

Lord Templeman said Mr Ward claimed the deal, made through his Jersey company, Marketing and Acquisition Consultants, had been approved by a board committee.

Mr Ward had then sought an order from the court which would entitle him to be paid without board authority, Lord Templeman said. Such an order would be in breach of the company's articles.

Lord Goff of Chieveley said he was not the only person who had been "startled" by the sum Mr Ward claimed had been paid to him under a binding contract.

"I have been conscious throughout this case that Guinness is seeking summary judgement for the sum claimed without any trial on the merits," Lord Goff said. "Even so, I have come to the conclusion that Mr Ward has no arguable defence. The simple fact is that there was, in law, no binding contract."

The first of two Guinness trials begins on Monday when Mr Ernest Saunders, former chairman, and three other defendants will face criminal charges arising from an alleged illegal share-support operation mounted by Guinness during the company's £2.5 billion takeover of Distillers.

Doctor who tried to hush up affair with patient struck off

A GP who seduced a patient and then asked her husband to hush up their affair was struck off the medical register yesterday.

Dr Robert Wilson was told he had "deliberately and seriously abused the trust that should exist between doctors and patients".

Since the woman, aged 40, had told her husband of the four-month affair their marriage had faltered, the professional conduct committee of the General Medical Council was told.

The mother of two said she had sexual intercourse with the married GP in his surgery and at her home about 15 or 16 times in 1988.

Dr Robert Wilson, of Royce Close, West Wittering, West Sussex, admitted adultery with the woman, known only as Mrs A. He was also found guilty of serious professional misconduct.

Sir Robert Kilpatrick, committee chairman, said: "You have deliberately and seri-



Dr Wilson: Feared publicity would bring end to career.

ously abused the trust that should exist between doctors and patients and their families."

The woman said that the doctor seduced her during a home visit while she was "wooly" from anti-depressants. He kissed and cuddled her on the first visit and they made love the second time.

The woman's husband said she told him of the affair in

October 1988. "I was absolutely shattered. I set up a meeting with Dr Wilson. He accepted all the blame."

"The following day he telephoned me and said he wanted to keep the whole thing quiet because his wife would divorce him and if that happened the GMC would find out and they would strike him off."

Since the affair the husband said he and his wife had been going through "some very difficult times".

The husband originally asked Dr Wilson, a fellow cricket club member in the village, to have a look at his wife because "she was in a daze".

Dr Wilson prescribed anti-depressants, went round to visit her and within days they had started an affair.

His wife said: "In the end I told my husband. I was absolutely desperate. I was very frightened he would leave me."

"I had just lost my parents and didn't want to lie to my husband."

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MPs say compensation claims backlog is scandalous

Victims of violent crime 'being injured twice over'

By Quentin Cowdry, Home Affairs Correspondent

Victims of violent crime are effectively being injured twice over because of a "scandalous" backlog of claims at the publicly-funded Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, an all-party Commons committee said yesterday.

In a withering appraisal, the Select Committee on Home Affairs painted a picture of an organization chronically under-funded, sapped by poor morale and caught in a spiralling decline in which staff were being diverted from case work to investigate complaints about delays.

The committee was also concerned that, in spite of an ever-increasing number of claims, fewer than a quarter of victims of violent crime applied for compensation from the board.

There was a vast reservoir of suffering which, the report said, the organization had a duty to try to mitigate.

Particularly worrying were the relatively few claims submitted relating to child abuse. MPs learnt while compiling the report that this was largely because many parents and council social services departments did not know the scheme existed.

The board has about

100,000 claims outstanding, the equivalent of over 600 man years of work. Three-quarters of applicants have to wait more than a year for payment compared with a quarter five years ago.

As applications have risen, productivity has slumped. Last year the board's 312 workers resolved, on average, 125 claims each, whereas in 1980, 155 employees each dealt with 170 claims.

Dismissing earlier attempts to improve efficiency as "sticking plaster solutions", the report proposed the immediate recruitment of 60 staff, better forecasting of demand by the Home Office and the urgent installation of new technology at the board's

London office, described as a "world of filing cabinets and heaps of paper".

However, the MPs suggested that the long-term solution to the board's problems could lie with the quango being transformed into a Whitehall agency. This, they said, would increase the management's independence and probably improve the chances of staff meeting productivity targets.

Pointing out that the Government had only recently renewed pledges to do more to assist crime victims, they stated: "The most tangible way of helping the victim is by providing compensation. The scandalous backlog which has built up in the board has

meant that a system designed to help victims is instead frustrating them."

The MPs said the organization, which when it was set up in 1964 was hailed as one of the most innovative schemes of its kind in the world, had to be set higher productivity targets but given more staff to achieve an "acceptable in-road" into the backlog.

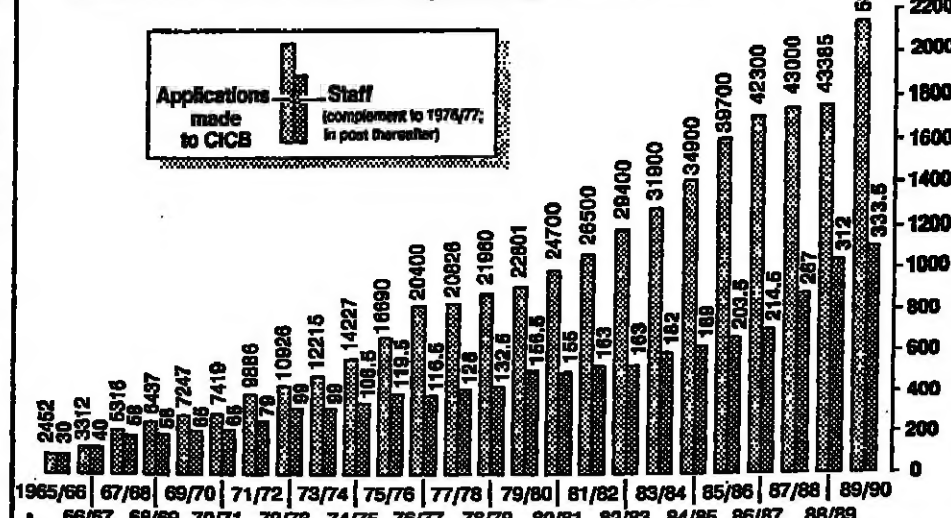
"We would certainly expect to see a more ambitious target than 48,000 for the number of resolutions next year and a productivity target higher than 150 per staff member," the report said.

Of paramount importance was the need to improve office technology. MPs said they were "startled" to find that an organization which processed such a large amount of paperwork was virtually devoid of computers. In 1982 an independent scrutiny had castigated its record-keeping system and recommended computerization but nothing had been done.

The report also recommended:

- An investigation into how the board might better publicize its work.
- An immediate campaign to publicize the entitlement of

Staff rises in relation to growing claims backlog



Frustration caused by delays

The "interminable" delays, which can affect even the most minor claims, frustrate victims and add to their anxiety, said Mrs Alex McDowell, coordinator of a victim support scheme in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear (Quentin Cowdry writes).

"There is no rhyme or reason in the delays," she said. "Someone who has had his nose broken in a bar brawl can sometimes wait for 12 to 14 months for a decision, while a more serious assault can be settled quicker. But the general picture is one of interminable delays."

Mrs McDowell, whose scheme is one of dozens around Britain sponsored by the charity, Victim Support, says the worst case on her books involves a widow, aged 53, who suffered severe psychological problems after being threatened by an armed robber. "The incident happened in August 1988 yet the woman has still not got through the second stage in the process," she said.

Mrs McDowell whose team of five paid staff and 60 volunteers counsel crime victims said: "The victims tend to get very despondent. We always say, to prevent them building false hopes, that compensation could take up to two years."

British wary of taking an interest in personal finances, survey says

By John Young

Britain appears to be a nation of "fritters" who neither know, nor in many cases, care too much about the state of their personal finances, according to a Gallup survey published yesterday.

Only two out of five people questioned in the survey claimed to know exactly how much they had in their current bank accounts. Most of the rest said they knew roughly, but one in eight admitted to having little or no idea.

Nearly a third had no idea what the basic rate of tax was, and nearly 44 per cent did not know what proportion of their income went in tax.

Almost nine out of 10 claimed they were confident about handling their finances, although nearly a third said they did not really like dealing with money matters. Most people relied on their own or their partner's financial advice, and only 6 per cent employed a professional accountant.

Nearly a third said they would rather spend money than save it. Only one in four knew what percentage of income was saved regularly each month; most conceded that they just put their money in a building society to look after it, and rarely if ever moved their savings to obtain a better rate of return.

One person in three was unable to estimate what he or she was worth.

Many of those who did so omitted one or more assets such as houses, cars, pensions, insurance policies, jewellery, antiques, furniture and household goods, and even savings.

Only three out of five claimed to have personal or family goals or objectives for the next year, and only two out of five had plans for the next 10 years.

Most of those cited short-term aims such as paying off loans or avoiding debts on credit cards or hire purchase. There were also plans for moving house, holidays and travel.

The survey says: "This suggests that most people can look only to the immediate future."

"Most people are happy to take things as they come, and

6 In important areas of life people have made few plans

about one in five admits that he or she likes to 'act spontaneously'."

However there is a more disturbing side to this "cavalier" British attitude to money matters: the apparent lack of concern about what happens to dependants after the person dies. More than half of those questioned said they "never" worried about what would happen to their families in the event of death, illness or serious accident, and a further quarter "rarely" worried.

Only two people out of five had made a will. More than 80 per cent had life insurance policies, but only one person in five had taken all three fundamental measures of making a will, and insuring against death or inability to work.

The study was commis-

sioned by American Express to mark the launch of a financial planning company, Acuma, and involved interviews with 937 adults with a broad mix of ages and backgrounds, who all held bank or building society accounts.

The survey concludes that "in some of the most important and financial areas of life people have failed to make even the most minimal of plans. It appears from the Gallup research that the majority of respondents exist in a state of ignorance about their finances - and they appear not to mind."

"Why enter the maze when they don't need to, seems the most common reaction."

The company plans to offer individual financial advice "packages" for £245 which, it claims is much less than the cost of similar work from an accountant or solicitor.

Other possible explanations for the cavalier British attitude might be the view that there is more to life than money or that people's affairs are in such a mess that they cannot bear to look beyond the next painful letter from the bank manager.

Mr John Crewe, Acuma's executive vice-president, conceded yesterday that some of those who came for advice, might be making a cry for help, and that the company would not be able to sort out all their problems.

However it would do its best, and would do so objectively, even if that meant advising more caution in the use of their American Express cards.

It's an ill wind that blows no good for craftsman



Jim Partridge, aged 36, a woodworker, carving a bench at his home in Oswestry, Shropshire. Since the 1987 storm he has developed his skill with a chain saw to make seats and benches from fallen trees. Mr Partridge, who also creates smaller items, expects to be in increasing demand after the latest gales.

Love-sick new romantics descend on old valentines

SALEROOM

by Sarah Jane Checkland Art Market Correspondent

The market in used *billet-doux* was booming at Christie's, South Kensington, yesterday.

An army of buyers, mainly, it appeared, love-sick gentlemen, descended on the auction house and paid extortionate prices for lacy, floral and embossed Victorian valentine cards.

They then scuttled away in breathless triumph, refusing to give their names.

This is the behavioural pattern of new romantic man, who shuns the modern tacky valentine cards which come mainly in categories of "humorous and cute".

Lesser romances may pay a few pence for 1990-vintage cards featuring teddy bears, rustic messages or both.

Yesterday's bidders included a man from Chelsea who paid £550 for a "valentine fan" decorated with pretty floral pictures and verses (estimate £60 to £100).

A man from Devon paid the top price of £385 (estimate £80 to £150) for an early nineteenth century heart-shaped

example which opens to reveal 24 mournful verses, concluding:

"For if you will thus cruel be, And hasten my sad destiny, Fare death at last must stand, my friend, And bring my Sorrows to an end."

Victorian senders were obligingly reticent about adding their own messages to those printed on the cards, and so today's lovers need have few fears of finding messages such as "SWALK" (Sealed With A Loving Kiss) soiling their card.

However, it would be a mistake to get the impression that either Victorian love or the new antique-card buyer consists solely of sacrifice and devotion.

One buyer paid £140 for a group of "humorous cards" including one which says:

"An old maid's life is better far, Than wed to such a thing as you are."

Another spent £49.50 on seven, including one which reads:

"Silk, Satin, Cotton, Wool, Dressed you look a perfect doll; Ribbons, feathers, flowers, lace, Can't make amends for such a face."

Over at the International Silver and Jewellery Fair at the Park Lane hotel, rich romantics can buy actual baubles at the Asprey stand.

Here can be found a heart-shaped presentation pendant made by Fabergé containing a portrait of Tsar Nicholas II at £6,500, as well as a Georgian necklace with multiple rows of chains supporting nine heart-shaped lockets, at £18,000.

Finally, the rich but disaffected lover can find the ultimate gift: a large, post-modernist cage. Intended for birds, it could be adapted for humans. It is on offer at £200,000.

Other rare Aston Martins

Record £1.4m for Aston Martin coupé

The most charismatic Aston Martin ever to come on the market fetched £1.4 million at Donington Park, Leicestershire, yesterday. The price was just below estimate (Sarah Jane Checkland writes).

The vehicle, nicknamed "Ivy" after its number plate of 1 VEV, was one of only 19 Zagato-bodied DB4GT two-door closed coupés built by the Aston Martin company. It once belonged to Mr John Ogier's private stable at Essex and was raced by Jim Clark in the 1960s.

The price for the vehicle, including the premium, was £1.54 million. It was a world record for a "closed" Aston Martin.

The vehicle was bought by Mr William Loughran, a classic car dealer of Preston, Lancashire, who stayed the course as bids rose dramatically from £800,000 to £1.4 million within two minutes.

The sale was something of a coup for Mr Robert Brooks, the young auctioneer who left Christie's recently to set up on his own.

Other rare Aston Martins fetched between £42,000 and £480,000. A Ferrari made more than £150,000.

Sotheby's has conquered the Japanese wine market, judging from the results of its sale in Tokyo yesterday.

Sotheby's total of 78.98 million yen (£320,000) entailed an increase of 80 per cent more than the total at any previous sale. Top price was £48,146 (double estimate) for a complete set of Chateau Mouton Rothschild wines from 1945 to 1986.

The Northern Ireland Queen's Gallantry medal awarded to Corporal G A Meredith for "leadership, fortitude, compassion, personal courage and stamina", offered due to the financial straits of its recipient, was withdrawn yesterday from auction at Sotheby's after a private sale to his regiment.

Star item at the Sotheby's sale of arms and armour was an ornate, 18th-century Spanish blunderbuss pistol, its trigger formed as a serpent. The pistol sold anonymously for £14,300, against an estimate of £3,000.

Southerners bemoan their lot

By Libby Jukes

The grass in the South is not necessarily greener than elsewhere in Britain, according to a survey of the Home Counties, Sussex, Hampshire and Dorset, published yesterday.

Even in the 11 per cent of households with an annual income of over £30,000 - about twice the national average - life is not all a bed of roses.

Bournemouth, the retirement capital of the South Coast, is one notable pocket of contentment, but the residents of Basingstoke in Hampshire were rather less happy.

Predictably, soaring property prices and mushrooming new estates are among the main causes of dissatisfaction.

Dr Alan Tomlinson, a Brighton Polytechnic researcher, found southerners generally enjoyed a higher standard of living and better job opportunities than their counterparts elsewhere in the UK, but were resentful of sharing their good fortune with others who cause urban congestion and clutter up the open spaces.

The survey disclosed that 70 per cent of men in the area are in full-time employment and three quarters of its population are in the top three social categories.

Whether southerners know how to enjoy themselves after work is debatable. The most popular leisure activities are home based, with over a third

indulging in a video-film or some gardening at least once a week, although a similar number also made it to the public house.

Although only a quarter had ventured outside the region in the past three months, other parts of England are the most popular holiday destinations, with Spain and Portugal second. Continental destinations are unlikely to draw greater numbers with the advent of the Channel tunnel, with 56 per cent saying they opposed the project and would not use it.

"State of the Region" was commissioned for the TVS programme *Green and Pleasant Land*, screened yesterday.

Nanny who held young girl under water is freed

A nanny who held a young girl's head under water in a fit of "sheer wanton cruelty" was freed by a judge yesterday.

Wendy Payne was twice seen ducking the girl aged two in a paddling pool and holding her under water for several seconds, the Inner London Crown Court was told.

She released the girl only after neighbours who saw what was happening screamed at her to stop, a jury was told.

Payne, aged 18, who pleaded not guilty to cruelty, also deliberately tripped the girl as they played in a garden while her parents were at work, the court was told.

She had been staying at the

house at Catford, south-east London, for three months as a live-in nanny to look after the child, who cannot be named.

Judge Pryor said Payne had shown "no degree of regret, repentance, or remorse". He said: "It isn't even as though you lost your temper as a result of some misbehaviour on the part of the child. This was just sheer wanton cruelty."

He placed Payne on probation for three years after ordering her to have psychiatric treatment. He ordered her to pay £100 in compensation to the victim.

The couple who helped rescue the child were awarded £100 each out of central funds.

Clapham turns Japanese and shuns its literary sons

By David Sapsted

Although Clapham in south London can count Samuel Pepys, Noel Coward and Graham Greene among its literary sons, the local council has decided that it is Kimosuke "Soseki" Natsume, a Japanese author, who should have the honour of a statue erected to his memory on Clapham Common.

The decision by Labour-controlled Lambeth Council to celebrate a writer who spent 18 months in the borough at the start of this century developing a dislike for England and the English has outraged local historians and English Heritage.

Mr Chris Patten, Secretary of State for the Environment, is now being asked by the Clapham Society to intervene to prevent the erection of a statue which, opponents say, will

be "out of place and out of proportion to Soseki's importance in this country".

Although Mr Natsume's name might not fall readily from the lips of the man on the Clapham omnibus, the council says he is one of Japan's most famous scribes and whose head appears on the 1,000 yen note.

More relevant, perhaps, is the fact that the council is planning to twin with the author's home town of Shinjuku, whose mayor originally proposed that the 2.1-metre high (almost 7ft) bronze bust should be erected on the common, opposite the lodgings in The Chase, where Soseki stayed.

In itself, Lambeth's decision to link up with Shinjuku, a prosperous suburb described by the Clapham Society as a "Japanese Weybridge", marks something of a departure for

the left-wing council which, in recent years, has twinned with a town in Nicaragua, a suburb of Moscow and a community in Sierra Leone.

"The idea appears to be that the statue will attract thousands of Japanese tourists to Clapham every year," Mrs Diana Ross, secretary of the Clapham Society, said.

"Our objection is that the character of the common should not be destroyed by statues, especially when the likes of Pepys, William Wilberforce, Sir Charles Barry [architect of the Houses of Parliament] and others with close ties with the borough have never been honoured in such a way."

"We are not opposed to honouring Soseki - indeed, we feel it could help in the mutual sharing of the cultural heritage of our two countries - but we feel a blue plaque from English

Heritage on the wall of his lodgings would be much more appropriate."

A spokesman for the council, whose amenity committee last week approved the erection of the statue, said: "Natsume is one of the most important Japanese writers of the 20th century."

"His time in Clapham marked the starting point of his important writing period and now this statue has been offered to us as a gift. There is no question of his being given preferential treatment. If someone offered us a statue of Shakespeare tomorrow we would be delighted."

Plans for the statue now have to go before Mr Patten for his approval, legal experts having assured the council that its erection would not represent any loss of amenity value on the common. The council denies

that the writer was ever an Anglophobe and says he spent his two years in Britain in Clapham.

However Mr John Haylock, an authoritative source on the writer, said in an article in *The London Magazine* that Soseki had come to England in 1900 on a scholarship from the Japanese government.

"They were unhappy years because the bursary... was not enough to live on comfortably in London. He liked neither England nor the English and did little except read in his lodgings, which he changed five times. Soseki, however, did admit that he admired the freedom and the individualism that existed in England."

● The only other statue on Clapham Common is an elaborate drinking fountain erected by the Temperance Society in 1860.

Teachers may have to stay with same primary pupils

By David Tyler, Education Editor

Primary teachers may be asked to stay with one class for its progression through school under proposals now being considered by a government minister.

Mrs Angela Rumbold, Minister of State for Education and Science, believes the change would benefit both teachers and children.

She said in Copenhagen yesterday: "More and more children are coming from families where partners change and to have the same teacher throughout their time in school would give a kind of security in what must be a bewildering environment."

"It would be good for a child to have one teacher they could work well with and with whom they could discuss any difficulties."

Mrs Rumbold was speaking at the end of a four-day visit to Denmark where the same teacher stays with a class from seven to 16. She is, however, unlikely to recommend the system for secondary schools where she believes pupils have sufficient maturity to deal with changes of teachers.

The Government's concern about standards of teaching in primary school is highlighted by the annual report of the chief inspector of schools, published this week.

Mrs Rumbold believes her

class teacher proposal could make life more interesting for the primary teachers and improve standards.

"It would be good for the teachers who would have to renew their skills and check their knowledge every year to move on with their class instead of doing the same thing every year. I am sure it would be more stimulating and more productive for them."

Mrs Rumbold was also impressed by the Danish system of teacher training where a practice school is attached to the training college. She said she would consider ways of achieving communication between colleges and schools in

England and Wales. "Teaching is a skilled job and it does not matter how clever you are on a subject if you cannot communicate with the children. We need to extend the amount of practical training for our teachers."

The minister said the Government would consider nominating some schools to play a greater role in teacher training. Extra resources would be provided and more staff appointed to handle the classroom training of students.

She said: "I am very keen for people to be given the chance to see if they can do the job before they get too far down the road."

Mrs Rumbold said that

everything should be done to make teaching as attractive as possible. "We must also find a way of bringing back teachers who have left the classroom. Some may be scared to return, but we must find ways for them to get their feet under the table."

"Others that do return are quite shattered by the reception they get. They are full of enthusiasm but are put off by the downbeat atmosphere."

"We should capitalize on that enthusiasm, admit that it can be quite difficult, but concentrate on making it a good experience and more attractive so that we keep people in our schools."

The Government is clearly concerned that some teacher training institutions are still adhering to the theories of the 1960s.

Higher grades target

A national campaign to increase the educational achievement of Scotland's school leavers was called for yesterday by Mr Hamish Morrison, chief executive of the Scottish Council, Development and Industry. He suggested that an appropriate target to set would be five standard grade passes by 66 per cent of pupils by 2001, which is already achieved in West Germany.

While he had high hopes for Scottish Enterprise, the new development and training body, he believed that vocational training on its own would not provide the competitiveness necessary to succeed in the new Europe.

"If we are to be as economically successful as we hope, by the end of the century some 33 per cent of our working population must be qualified for professional or managerial occupations," he said. "Unless we can reach our target for educational achievement, all the vocational training in the world will not prevent us slipping down the European league table."

Accessories steal the show



Richly embroidered accessories from the Lesage spring and summer collection being modelled by January Dickson at Liberty, central London, yesterday. The gold work handbag costs £1,780 and the cuff £250. Archive work from Lesage is also being exhibited.

Flat note as opera singers fall out

A discordant note struck when two opera singers decided to share a flat, beginning a long-running wrangle over its ownership that ended in the High Court yesterday.

Miss Gaynor Miles, a soprano, said the north London flat she bought six years ago entirely belonged to her and Miss Stacey Almond, her former flatmate, had no financial interest in it.

Miss Almond however said they had an oral agreement that she had a one-third interest in the two-bedroom flat in Cricklewood.

Miss Almond said they had agreed Miss Miles should buy the flat in her sole name because at that time Miss Almond was unemployed.

She said that in return for paying £250 towards the purchase price, helping with decorating, and paying about half the mortgage and outgoings, it was agreed Miss Almond should receive a one-third interest in the flat.

She said the friendship struck a low note, however, when Miss Miles made it difficult for her to practise singing by playing records loudly, until she finally left.

Dismissing her action, Mr Justice Morritt said that although Miss Almond had asked for a share in the flat, this had never been agreed.

Salary reviews

Performance-linked pay studied by CBI

By Tim Jones, Employment Affairs Correspondent

The Confederation of British Industry and other employers' organizations are studying proposals which could end the annual pay round in favour of a scheme linking rewards to performance.

Percentage levels of performance schemes (Plops), which are gaining ground in spite of union objections, have been introduced in the motor industry, whose heavily unionised structure historically demands a single negotiated rate.

The most radical form of Plops is being operated by the Alliance and Leicester Building Society, which is encouraging "dead wood" staff to leave by awarding them no annual pay rises while high achievers receive salary increases of up to 20 per cent. Under the scheme, staff are rated annually between zero and 200 per cent for their attitude, performance and achievement.

Those achieving 100 per cent or more are guaranteed the average rise, which was 11 per cent last year, while those who score 85 per cent or less receive nothing and face disciplinary interviews.

Since the scheme was introduced in 1987, the turnover among the company's most highly-valued staff has fallen to only 3 per cent while half of the 150 or so who achieved poor ratings have left.

Mr Mike Nicholson, assistant general manager of personnel and training, said: "Unlike most companies who give everyone a basic pay rise and hold back some money to distribute in merit rises, we do not believe in paying people just for turning up for work."

In a different scheme, the 3,000 employees of Scottish Widows, the financial services company, stand to gain bonuses of up to 8 per cent this year as part of a drive to improve the quality of service.

Each member of staff will receive the same percentage although individual assessments will enable some to earn an additional one per cent.

IBM, which employs more than 18,000 in Britain, has for years graded its employees on a scale of one to four. Their pay depends on how well they carry out annual performance objectives.

Performance or merit pay is also given to shop floor workers at Nissan's plant at Washlington, Tyne and Wear, where only about a quarter of employees are unionised.

At Ford, unions negotiate the rate for the job for each grade. Within those bands, there are no pay differences.

At Kodak, salaries for nearly 1,600 senior staff were reviewed for the first time last year on an all-senior basis.

Performance-related pay has also been introduced for most administrative grades in Whitehall. From higher executive officer up to deputy secretary level, officials receive part of their pay as "merit money". Moves to reorganize Whitehall as "executive agencies" will further increase the numbers paid in this way.

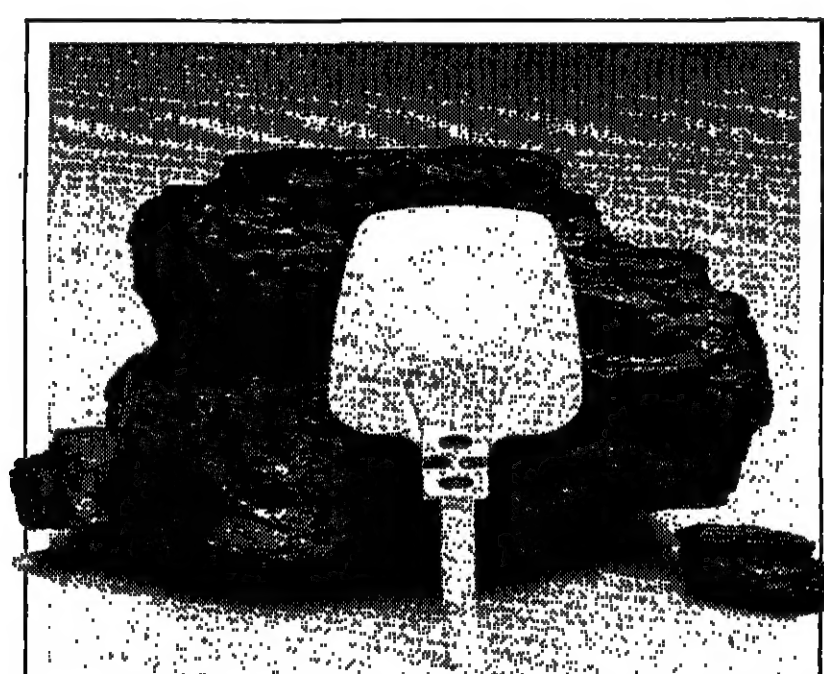
The CBI said yesterday it was obvious that Plops were becoming increasingly widespread. The organization is carrying out a survey into their role.

Most companies who operate the schemes believe they improve performance both of employees and the company.

The TUC said that while it fully supported increased performance, it believed there were "few jobs where it can be measured in a fair and objective way among individuals".

The TUC said Plops could also create divisions which would be counter-productive to the company's performance.

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Art vandalism trial

A man accused of slashing a painting worth an estimated £1 million at the National Gallery, London, was committed for trial at Southwark Crown Court by Bow Street magistrates yesterday.

Martin Paul Came, aged 27 and unemployed, of Copplestone Drive, Exeter, is charged with criminal damage to "La Madonna Del Gatto" on January 10. The work was painted by Italian master Federico Barocci before 1577. An application for bail was refused.

Aids death toll

Forty-eight Aids deaths were reported in Britain last month, the Department of Health said, taking the toll to the end of January to 1,660.

TB slaughter

A herd of 136 deer is being slaughtered on a farm near Dalbeattie, Dumfries and Galloway, because of tuberculosis. It is the first compulsory slaughter in Scotland.

Monks dug up

Workmen have unearthed the skeletons of eight 12th-century monks while digging in the garden of a house in Monks Road, Lincoln.

Rise in crime

Crime rose in Derbyshire by 13 per cent last year, according to the annual police report, with burglaries up 8 per cent.

Council role

The Nature Conservancy Council has made Dr Derek Langslow chief scientist to succeed Dr Peter Bridgewater. He is now director of policy, planning and services.

Cash warning

Inspector Tony Kimble of Dunstable police, Bedfordshire, has warned the public to be wary of common posing as suspended ambulance workers collecting money.

Hoax case

A police constable is to appear before Winchester magistrates in connection with a bomb hoax in Andover, Hampshire, last summer. The officer, who has not been named, as been suspended on full pay.

Fraud charge

A policeman charged with credit card fraud and stealing mail appeared before Nottingham magistrates. Police Constable Jonathan Preen, aged 27, of Arnold, Nottinghamshire, was remanded in custody until tomorrow.

Violin theft

Police are hunting a mugger who grabbed an 80-year-old violin worth £3,000 from a woman in a park in Handsworth, Birmingham. It is marked "Williams Five".

Art vandalism trial

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CHANGING FACE OF EUROPE

Ligachov row on Tbilisi crackdown

Moscow (Reuters) — Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, had a heated row with Mr Yegor Ligachov at the Central Committee meeting this week over allegations that the Kremlin had authorized the dispatch of troops to Tbilisi, the Georgian capital, to quell unrest.

Pravda, which published yesterday what it said was the full text of the speeches at the meeting, reported that other committee members, apparently stunned, sat in silence. In an interview published in the liberal weekly, *Ogonyok*, the head of a parliamentary commission had charged that Mr Ligachov chaired a secret meeting of top officials which sent in the troops last April — without the knowledge of either Mr Gorbachev or Mr Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Prime Minister.

Twenty people died and more than 200 were wounded when the Army broke up a protest with poison gas. Mr Ligachov, in his speech to the Central Committee on Tuesday, denied the allegations, saying that the entire senior leadership approved the plan at a special meeting.

But Mr Shevardnadze, a close ally of Mr Gorbachev, challenged his version of events and said that the issue had been settled by a parliamentary commission. "In the interests of justice, I want to say there was no Politburo meeting (on the use of troops)," he said. "It was categorically announced, there was a categorical statement by the general secretary, that the Politburo should settle the problem by political means," he said.

Mr Ligachov interjected: "Eduard Amvrosiyevich, there are no discrepancies between us."

Mr Shevardnadze retorted: "I am not saying there are discrepancies. But listen, what am I supposed to do if a

magazine of four million is distorting the essence of the matter? After all, I have the right to express my point of view."

Mr Ligachov asked the Central Committee: "Why do you remain silent, dear comrades?"

Mr Gorbachev, trying to mediate, said: "I think we must finish this first part and move on."

However, Mr Shevardnadze continued: "I think there is no reason for such a morbid reaction... I am not discussing it with you, but asking a question. Why was it necessary to begin the discussion after the (work of) the parliament?"

Mr Ligachov: "I didn't start it."

Mr Shevardnadze: "I am

Moscow (Reuters) — A Soviet nuclear submarine armed with intercontinental ballistic missiles suffered a serious accident in December during a weapons test, but no lives were lost, the daily *Kommunist* newspaper said yesterday. The report said "large damage was done to the surrounding water and territory", making it clear that either the nuclear reactor or missiles had released radioactivity.

not blaming you," Mr Gorbachev issued another appeal for calm.

Mr Ligachov said rumours aimed at him were part of a campaign to distract the people from threats to President Gorbachev's programme of reform.

Mr Medvedev, the Soviet Communist Party's ideology chief, admitting yesterday that many of the party's ideas had been misconceived, acknowledged some Anglo-Saxon ones were right (Andrew McEwen writes).

In a speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London, Mr Medvedev, who is in Britain as the leader of a Soviet

parliamentary delegation, said: "We have abandoned our view of man as the means of the state's pragmatic policies... the end, however lofty it may be, can not justify any means to achieve it. The flouting of moral standards in politics and in life always backfires against the people."

The party had realized that many of the economic mechanisms, political theories and philosophical concepts, which it previously deemed fallacious because they were considered bourgeois, were in fact "the property of all civilization". He acknowledged that the market, of itself, did not give rise to exploitation, but was a sensitive instrument which the Soviet Union must learn to use. "The ideas of people's sovereignty, civil society, parliamentarism and the separation of power, which were developed and elaborated in the Anglo-Saxon political culture are... part of the common human values," he said.

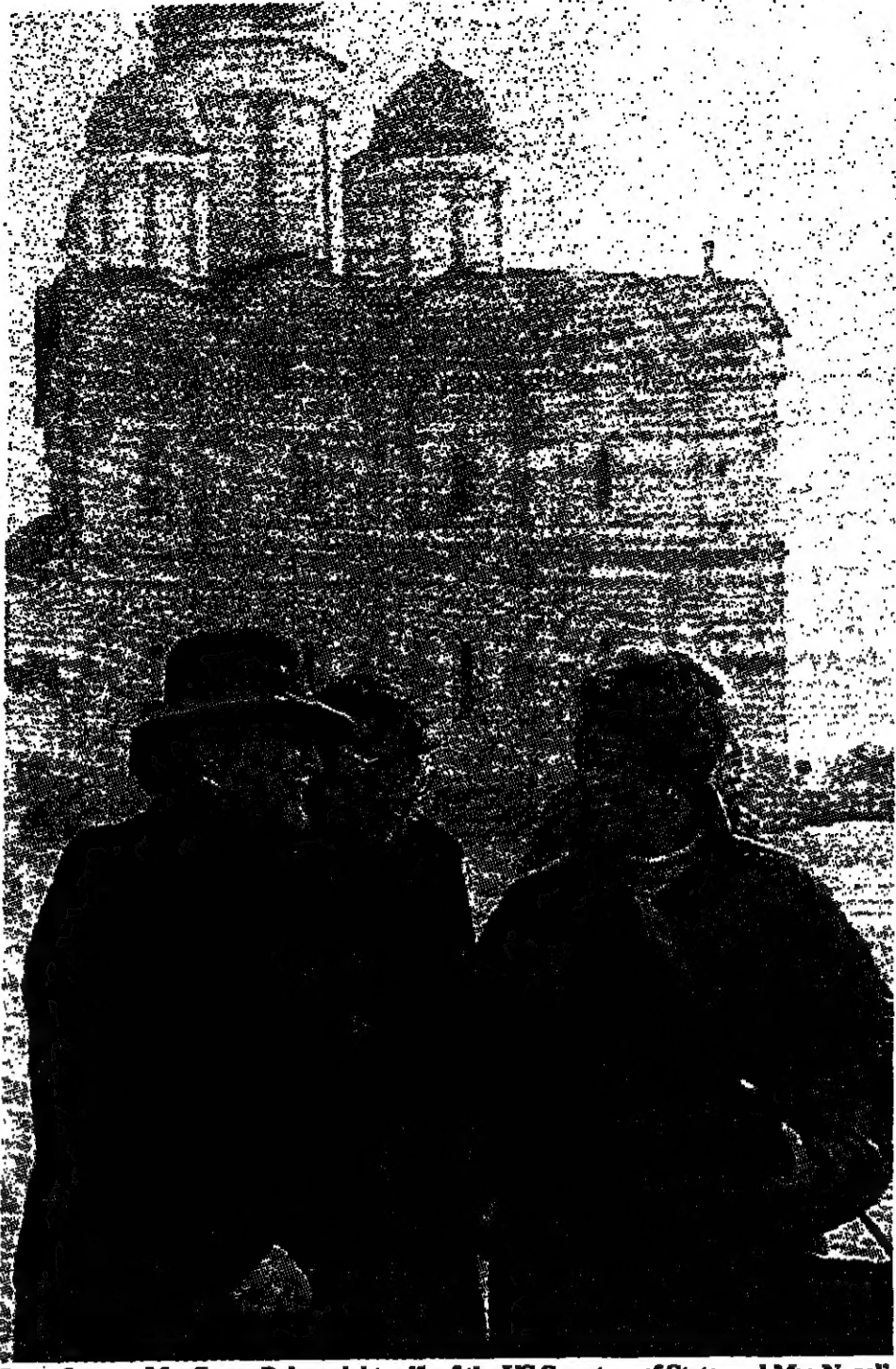
But Mr Medvedev pointed out: "Perestroika is not a departure from socialism, as some conservative critics try to convince us. It is a transition from the state authoritarian model of society to democratic, humane and man-oriented socialism."

He said the party had "absolutely no intention" of abandoning the positive elements in its policies. "Perestroika, or restructuring, is not a new construction project."

Some of Mr Medvedev's views would not have sounded out of place coming from a British Labour Party politician. "We are opposed to the ideology and psychology of equality in poverty," he said.

There was general agreement, he said, on the need to establish a market, but one regulated on socialist lines. He showed no enthusiasm for the free market principles flourishing in the West.

Robert Kilroy-Silk, page 12



In conference: Mrs Susan Baker, right, wife of the US Secretary of State, and Mrs Nandali Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister's wife, chatting outside the Kremlin yesterday.

Nato revises arms cut offer to East bloc

By Michael Binyon, Brussels and Michael Evans, London

Nato formally tabled revised proposals for troop and aircraft cuts yesterday in a bid to remove the remaining obstacles in the way of a swift agreement in Vienna on Conventional Forces in Europe.

The move came as Britain prepared a strategy to draw France back into Nato's decision-making process for the collective security of Europe. Senior British ministers are arguing that French fears over German unification can best be met by France taking a more active role in joint security decisions.

One of the main concessions offered to the Warsaw Pact in Vienna yesterday was to include all vehicles down to 13 tonnes in the ceiling of 20,000 tanks for both alliances in Europe. Previously Nato had insisted on including only vehicles above 20 tonnes, to which the Soviet delegation in particular had objected. Sources said the Kremlin was afraid the upper limit would allow the West to build up its stock of modern light tanks.

Also, the ceiling for armoured combat vehicles, which

was recently raised from 28,000 to 30,000 for each side, now has three sub-headings: Armoured personnel-carriers, armoured infantry fighting vehicles, like Britain's Warrior, and heavy armoured combat vehicles, which is anything with a 75 mm gun that weighs more than seven tonnes, such as the British Scorpion and the French AXM10. Nato has proposed a new sub-ceiling on the heavy armoured vehicles of 3,000.

The West also agreed to drop its previous ceiling on combat aircraft from 5,700 to 4,700 on each side, the East's original figure. This would be achieved mainly by excluding so-called primary trainers, which are lightly armed, a category where the Warsaw Pact has a big advantage with 2,200 to the West's 900.

In another significant concession, Nato agreed to allow an additional separate category of 500 so-called air-defence interceptors on each side, giving an overall total of 5,200 aircraft.

Nato yesterday also dropped its insistence on including all military helicopters in the talks. It has now agreed to consider only those armed with anti-tank missiles and to exclude lightly armed "combat-support" helicopters. Countries could move helicopters from the first to the second category by disarming them under strict conditions.

Herr Manfred Wörner, the Secretary-General of Nato, yesterday called on the alliance urgently to develop a common concept for German unity.

He said Nato was not an obstacle to German unity, nor to European integration. Ger-

man unity would come, and politicians and diplomats had to recognize this. They had to develop a framework so that the process was smooth and harmonious and avoided crises or erratic developments that put all of Europe at risk.

In his most outspoken comment on German unification, the former German Defence Minister said in a speech in Hamburg that the continued existence of Nato and progress towards German unity were compatible and mutually dependent.

"To make the dissolution of the Alliance a sine qua non of German unity would deprive both Germany and Europe of a basic force for stability. Only firm anchoring in the West can provide the fundamental stability for the difficult process in which we are engaged."

He said a drifting, neutral Germany could not be a solution. "It would not even be in the enlightened self-interest of the Soviets... There is no acceptable alternative to Germany remaining anchored in the Atlantic Alliance — and belonging to the European Community..."

"The Soviet Union will have to accept — and is probably already on the way to doing so — that its security will be enhanced rather than impaired by the loss of its Central and East European buffer zone."

Moscow's security interest would be better served by intensification of the disarmament process, further reduction of military forces and extension of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process, taking advantage of the alliance as a partner in the management of peace.

He saw two ways of protecting Soviet security interests with a united Germany in Nato: either a special military status for East German territory, or an agreement not to extend military integration to that territory.

It was crucial that the European Community, Nato and the CSCE should be developed as a framework for German and European unity. *Continued on page 13*



Herr Wörner: Call for a common concept on unity.

Brussels studies plan for German fiscal harmony

From Michael Binyon, Brussels

A special task force on Germany, set up by the European Commission to look at East Germany and the implications of reunification, held its first meeting yesterday, as officials here studied the Bonn plan for fiscal unity between East and West Germany.

Herr Helmut Kohl, the West German Chancellor, telephoned M Jacques Delors, the Commission President, on Wednesday night to reassure him that Bonn's offer to extend the Deutsche mark zone to East Germany would not affect his country's commitment to European economic and monetary union (EMU).

The Chancellor said there would be no delay in following the EC timetable, agreed at last month's Strasbourg summit, which calls for an intergovernmental conference at the end of the year. This will draw up proposals for a new treaty to implement the second and third stages of the Delors report on EMU.

The EC task force has five

commissioners most closely involved in relations with Germany, under the leadership of Herr Martin Bangemann, the Internal Market Commissioner, and including M Delors and Mr Frans Andriessen, the External Affairs Commissioner. Neither Sir Leon Brittan nor Mr Bruce Millan, the two British commissioners, are included.

Herr Bangemann said the task force, in constant touch with the new unification unit in the Bonn Government, now considered it most likely that the five East German *Länder* (states) would vote to join the Federal Republic soon after the March elections.

West Germany would probably pay up to 80 per cent of the extra costs, but the rest would have to be carried by the Community.

He said the EC could not remain static in the rapidly changing situation. The priority was to convince East Germans to stay in their country by offering them political and economic opportunities. The

task force would also look at the military aspects of unity later.

The new German monetary union would fit in with the timetable for EMU, as the period would be long enough.

Asked about the scepticism on German unity recently raised in Bonn by Mr Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, Herr Bangemann tartly replied: "I have never known Mr Hurd be enthusiastic about anything at all. So that doesn't worry me. But you have to ask: what are the alternatives?"

He said those who feared the political and economic weight of a larger Germany in the EC should ask if a united Germany would be better outside the Community. West Germany was already strong, but had never used its influence in the EC in a "disloyal" way.

Reactions to the Bonn plan for German monetary union have been mixed. Some officials pushing hardest for the Delors plan say Herr Kohl's proposals could even speed

progress toward a common European currency.

"The exchange rate mechanism could live with it," one official said. "It all depends how it is done, and on the conversion rate of the East German mark. It is not necessarily inflationary." There might have to be a single realignment of the rates, he said. So far, the proposal has strengthened the Deutsche mark, instead of the long-term weakening predicted.

On the political side, he said the Bonn Government's overruling of Dr Karl Otto Pöhl, president of the Bundesbank and one of the main sceptics of the Delors plans for EMU, could put his own independence into question. This might make it easier for the Bonn Government — and other Community members — to take a different line from him in the future.

However, there is considerable uncertainty here over the effect of the Kohl plan. The group of five commissioners now accept that the

prospect of East Germany entering the EC as its 13th member is unrealistic: the country is more likely to come in as part of a larger Germany, and negotiations will have to start with Bonn on what special arrangements must be made to phase in EC law.

The German task force will insist that East Germany cannot enter the EC, even in loose federation with West Germany, before a radical overhaul of its economy.

Legal and institutional issues will still remain, and the new German state may suddenly find that, instead of being the paymaster of Europe, it will be entitled to regional funds to bring living standards in its eastern territory up to the higher Community average. There will be opposition from other poorer states, such as Ireland and Greece, if their funds are cut.

The task force will also have to decide whether the larger Germany would be entitled to more commissioners than the present two.

New unrest stirs in cradle of revolution

From Philip Jacobson, Timisoara

On buildings pock-marked by stray bullets in fierce fighting here a few weeks ago, an eruption of sharp-edged posters signals the opening of what many consider the second round of Timisoara's struggle for real freedom.

So far, the exchanges are purely political, but mounting anger in the city about the direction in which the new rulers of Romania are taking the nation is reflected in the increasingly harsh tones of these writings on the wall.

Scrawled by hand or crudely printed, anonymous or signed, the posters ask the same question endlessly debated by the big crowds that gather to read each fresh crop: What has happened to the revolution that we began here? And the long arguments this provokes suggest that the great surge of solidarity, the bond of common purpose that emerged after the massacre of peaceful demonstrators in Opera Square, is now being tested to the limit.

At the heart is a pervasive belief that the wrong people are somehow still running Timisoara: the brutal, the

corrupt, the time-serving party hacks, all those whom the downfall of Nicolae Ceausescu was supposed to have swept away for ever. Take Lieutenant-Colonel Dumitrescu of the local militia, who was the city's chief traffic officer before the uprising: a notoriously venal and widely detested figure by all accounts.

In a scathing contribution to the poster campaign, one Mr Victor Mititelu recalls how, as protests against the dictatorship mounted on the day of the shootings, December 17, the colonel was seen arresting and beating up demonstrators. "He was urging on his thugs before our very eyes," Mr Mititelu writes, demanding to know how such a person could possibly have been promoted to a top job in police headquarters soon after the National Salvation Front took control of Timisoara. "Who is protecting and sustaining him in this post, and why?"

In a small and clannish city like this, officials in Colonel Dumitrescu's position were well known public figures, and

the decision to retain him and a dozen or more others considered hardline Ceausescu loyalists causes genuine outrage.

"Here, look at this!" said a young man, pulling me over to a poster devoted to a vigorous character assassination of Victor Popa of Timisoara TV. "I know this guy, and he was a real crawler under the old regime. All of a sudden, he's become a democrat and still has a good job there. It's just unbelievable."

Such resentment can only be focused, ultimately, on the new civilian authorities, who are already routinely berated for having "kidnapped" the revolution and appropriated power in Timisoara for their own benefit.

According to reliable sources here, only one of the original 13 Timisoara men who literally took their life into their hands by meeting Ceausescu's envoys in the immediate aftermath of the massacre now remains on the Front's 51-member regional committee (an actor called Valentin Vartan, he says he stayed on because "someone

has to act as a witness"). Anger reached a peak in the run-up to elections for a new district council that was to replace the entrenched membership of the Front.

The banners may have hailed the "first free and democratic poll in Romania", but feelings were running very high after a series of procedural wrangles forced the vote to be delayed four times.

Earlier this month, angry demonstrators marched on the Front's headquarters to protest at the delay, and although the election did finally take place — under the eyes of a hastily appointed independent watchdog group — Timisoara was soon alive with rumours that the new council would not be allowed to take power.

In the midst of such confusion, people naturally looked to the Army for guidance and reassurance. But, apart from bored conscripts guarding public buildings, and a few red-tailed officers bustling around with shiny attaché cases, there is no real military presence here any longer. Perhaps the generals have

washed their hands of Timisoara, with its tiresome feuding about the workings of democracy, not to mention the locals' habit of reminding visitors that it was the Army which shot most of the demonstrators here. A military spokesman would certainly not be drawn on suggestion that the troops might eventually be called on to resolve any serious confrontation over who wields civilian authority.

All of which brings us back to the latest wall posters, attacking the Timisoara police force for refusing to accept Lieutenant-Colonel Viorel Oancea as their new boss. He had changed sides when it was still highly dangerous, and was wounded fighting for the revolution. Understandably, he is a popular local figure, generally most acceptable to the public, but the police threatened to strike if he gets the job.

"What stupendous nerve!" explodes one anonymous pamphleteer. "These are the same bastards who were ready to strike down strikers in Ceausescu days."

The Commissioner's new carrot-and-stick policy — which he appears to have announced early in order to win public support before tackling his fellow commissioners — also envisages a new "environmental fund" to help pay for tougher anti-pollution controls.

viser added that the Commission was still keeping an eye on the quality of Britain's bathing water. The Commissioner's new carrot-and-stick policy — which he appears to have announced early in order to win public support before tackling his fellow commissioners — also envisages a new "environmental fund" to help pay for tougher anti-pollution controls.

As one of the auction organizers explained at the beginning, all the items had been confiscated by the Customs as illegal exports. Some people get hold of Western goods on the Soviet black market and take them abroad to fund their stay. The didacticism of the introduction was deliberate, but not appreciated. "And another thing," said the organizer, before handing over to the auctioneer. "If you try to smuggle drugs across the border in your car, the car gets confiscated along with the drugs."

"Why don't you auction off the drugs, then?" shouted someone from the audience who was about to bid for lot number one — a Polish-made saloon car. The car was finally hammered down for 27,000 roubles — a sum equivalent to £27,000 at the old official exchange rate, and a more reasonable £2,700 at the new, tourist rate. Although this was more

Letter from Moscow

Customs sets up shop to corner the black market

Until this week no one would have thought of going to the railwaymen's club to buy a video recorder or a personal computer. But on Wednesday this was the venue for the first of what may well become a regular feature of Moscow life: the Soviet Customs auction.

A motley collection of Soviet citizens, including a good sprinkling of swarthy southerners in leather jackets and shiny trousers, gathered at 10am for three hours of commerce and entertainment. There was a suave, fast-talking auctioneer, and the inevitable four-person commission at the back of the platform to arbitrate.

Tickets cost an exorbitant 10 roubles — in a country where the average evening at the theatre costs less than four. There was no room for voyeurs at the pre-auction exhibition either, when only auction tickets would guarantee admission. But with the starting price of the cheapest lot — a Sony stereo tape-recorder — set at 1,200 roubles (the equivalent of six months' wages for the average Soviet worker) the ticket price was unlikely to be a deterrent. Six hundred tickets were printed, and at least 500 people turned up.

The shabbiness of the sale catalogue — a duplicated list of technical descriptions and prices on recycled paper, no photographs — belied the attractions of the goods on offer.

Exclusively Western or Japanese electronic products — looking doubly stylish and efficient in their unaccustomed Soviet setting — were followed by a succession of gold and diamond jewellery and three fur coats.

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than three times its reserve price, the *cognoscenti* in the audience suggested that this was about right: the sort of price you might pay — perish the thought — on the black market.

The stars of the auction, however, to universal surprise, were two desk-top photocopyers. From a reserve of 6,000 roubles, each was hammered down after fierce bidding for more than 40,000 roubles. "Stratospheric," was how one Russian described the prices. The reason was evident in a question shouted up to the platform as the first copier was brought out: "If we buy it, can we legally keep it?" A hurried consultation by the commission decided that the law was being changed; there would be no "unpleasantness".

The two-day auction was the latest attempt by the Soviet authorities to reduce the hold of the black market on the economy by providing legal, if ideologically questionable, alternatives. It had an added educational element: it warned Soviet citizens of the risk of smuggling and the likelihood of getting caught. It also gave the authorities a good idea of what "deficit" goods like personal computers will fetch on the black market — and how high they could be priced to undermine the illegal trade.

But it did not pass without controversy. "We were promised anonymity," shouted a couple of swarthy, denim-clad men from one corner as a photographer turned his lens on them. The appeal was echoed from the other side of the hall as a television camera, supposedly making a promotional film for the Customs service, zoomed in. The commission decided to ban the cameras.

As the last lots were announced, people became restless. A cry went up from the floor: "Has anyone not paid for their goods?" — will they be going back under the hammer? The commission consulted; it transpired that a few people had asked for their purchases to be held until 5pm so they could get the money. There was uproar. "The rules say you have to pay in full within half an hour of bidding or the goods go back for resale," people shouted. "Why have rules if you don't keep them?"

Finally came the standard Soviet verdict: "The commission has decided. That is how it will be." The goods would not go back for resale until five o'clock.

Mary Dejevsky

Commissioner urges growth of EC green powers

From Peter Gullford, Brussels

The European Community's most senior environment official has called for greater treaty powers permitting the European Commission to enforce anti-pollution directives and combat the dismal environmental record of some member states.

Signor Carlo Ripa de Meana, the EC Environment

Commissioner, yesterday said that, when Community leaders attend their inter-governmental conference in December on economic and monetary union, a separate conference could give Brussels fresh environmental powers.

This echoes the remarks of M Jacques Delors, the Commission President, whose recent call for a more muscular Commission as a first step towards a politically united

Europe was greeted with scepticism, not least in Britain.

A "green police force" of EC inspectors was required, Signor Ripa de Meana said, to travel round the Community hunting down those who flouted EC pollution standards. Environment grants to the most disobedient states could be doctored, he warned.

He told reporters that almost all EC countries were not observing the EC directives

and that some persistently refused to meet EC standards. Britain got off lightly as the Commissioner heaped scorn on his native Italy, which faces 40 separate actions in the European Court of Justice.

Denmark and Luxembourg were "in the vanguard" of EC pollution control, said Signor Ripa de Meana. He praised Britain for always obeying European court rulings on green issues, although an ad-

viser added that the Commission was still keeping an eye on the quality of Britain's bathing water.

The Commissioner's new carrot-and-stick policy — which he appears to have announced early in order to win public support before tackling his fellow commissioners — also envisages a new "environmental fund" to help pay for tougher anti-pollution controls.

CHANGING FACE OF EUROPE

East Berlin opposition finds short cut to unity

From Ian Murray, Bonn

Germany could be legally united immediately after the East German elections on March 18, say the opposition Social Democrats (SPD). They now believe the newly elected East German Volkskammer (parliament) will exercise its right under West Germany's Basic Law to accede to the Federal Republic by May at the latest.

As the Basic Law stands there would then be nothing to prevent the democratically elected members of the Volkskammer going to Bonn to join the Bundestag. Since polls suggest that the SPD in the East is likely to win 54 per cent of the vote against 11 per cent for the Christian Democrats (CDU) there, this would give the opposition in the Bundestag a healthy overall majority capable of voting Herr Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, out of power.

This scenario is causing considerable concern, not only inside the CDU but among the allies, who have been relying on an international convention from 1954 to give them the final say for any reunification.

Tomorrow Herr Kohl and Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the Foreign Minister, fly to Moscow in an attempt to reassure President Gorbachev that the reunification of Germany does not threaten Soviet security. The visit is part of an undertaking to keep all four victorious Second World War powers closely informed of developments.

There is growing certainty that reunification in principle will be a quick process, with the necessary international negotiations being forced through at relative breakneck pace to keep up with developments.

Herr Herbert Helmrich, a lawyer and CDU member who heads the Bundestag's legal committee, has agreed that the SPD's interpretation of the Basic Law is correct, and warned that it makes accession likely much sooner than expected.

Herr Max Streibl, the Christian Social Union (CSU) Prime Minister of Bavaria, has also predicted that the Länder (states) will take this short cut to reunification.

The same point was made

in Brussels this week by Herr Manfred Brunner, a senior West German EC official. He said: "I believe it is probable that immediately after March 18 the East German Länder, which legally never ceased to exist, will be reconstituted and will declare their accession to the Federal Republic."

There is confidence among the allies, however, that West Germany will honour its international commitments and make sure that the proper international agreements are reached before reunification.

The legal basis of the "short cut" to union is Article 23 of the Basic Law which lays down that its jurisdiction covers the original West German Länder and adds: "In other parts of Germany it shall be put into force on their accession." This in essence was the route followed by the Saarland after it voted to join the Federal Republic in 1955.

If the Volkskammer decides to reconstitute the five East German Länder - Thuringia, Saxony, Lower Saxony, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg - they could then exercise the right in the Basic Law to put it into force. No plebiscite would be needed.

The three Western allies' rights were last defined in the 1954 Paris Convention, signed with West Germany, which said they retained their powers and responsibilities relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole, including the reunification of Germany and a peace settlement.

Another article of the convention says that the allies "will co-operate to achieve, by peaceful means, their common aim of a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal-democratic constitution like that of the Federal Republic".

The newspaper *Bild* says that Britain will be left as an outsider in the reunification issue. For weeks past, it says, Mrs Thatcher has been "grumbling along" against reunification, even though she had welcomed the fall of the Berlin Wall as "a great day for freedom". On the same day, however, the paper says that she said of reunification that it was "much too early" and that the task now was to build a real democracy and bring about economic reform.

Kinnock advocates caution over troop reductions

From Anne McElvoy, West Berlin

The Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, said yesterday that Britain risked "being put on the sidelines in the development in Europe", and accused the Government of nostalgia for the uncertainties of the Cold War.

Mr Kinnock said in an interview in West Berlin that Mrs Thatcher was stalling on her response to German reunification. "The present policy of tip-toeing around the edge of this issue leaves us open to criticism for inaction. We are wasting what influence we could have in ensuring that the process is stable and beneficial to all."

In a speech to the Confederation of Socialist Parties in Europe, the Labour leader said his party accepted German reunification as an inevitability and a chance to establish social democracy as a leading force in European politics.

Labour's defence review, scheduled for later this year, would have to take account of the new climate in Europe, he said, but he denied that the party would support speedy troop withdrawals or disarmament moves. "We are quite aware that people want to feel secure... especially in the time of upheaval," he said.

Mr Kinnock declared his



Mr Kinnock with Mr Wim Kok, the Dutch Finance Minister, and Herr Hans-Jochen Vogel, leader of West Germany's Socialists, in West Berlin yesterday prior to the European Socialist congress.

support for the proposal of Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the West German Foreign Minister, that a unified Germany could belong to Nato, with the troops of Nato and the Warsaw Pact confined to the present territories. He said

that Labour's approach to the defence of a future Europe would be a cautious one.

Mr Kinnock had talks with Herr Ibrahim Böhm, the leader of the East German Social Democrats, whom he had been advising on prepara-

tion for the March elections in the country.

"The first piece of advice I gave him was about the opinion polls," Mr Kinnock said.

The first opinion poll in East Germany on Wednesday gave Herr Böhm's party 54

per cent of the vote. Mr Böhm commented that he was heeding the warnings of the Labour leader.

The congress has served to boost the morale of Social Democrats in the two Germanies as the party prepares

for the election in both. Herr Walter Momper (SPD), the ruling mayor of West Berlin, said that the early success of East Germany's Social Democrats heralded a new era of influence for the party.

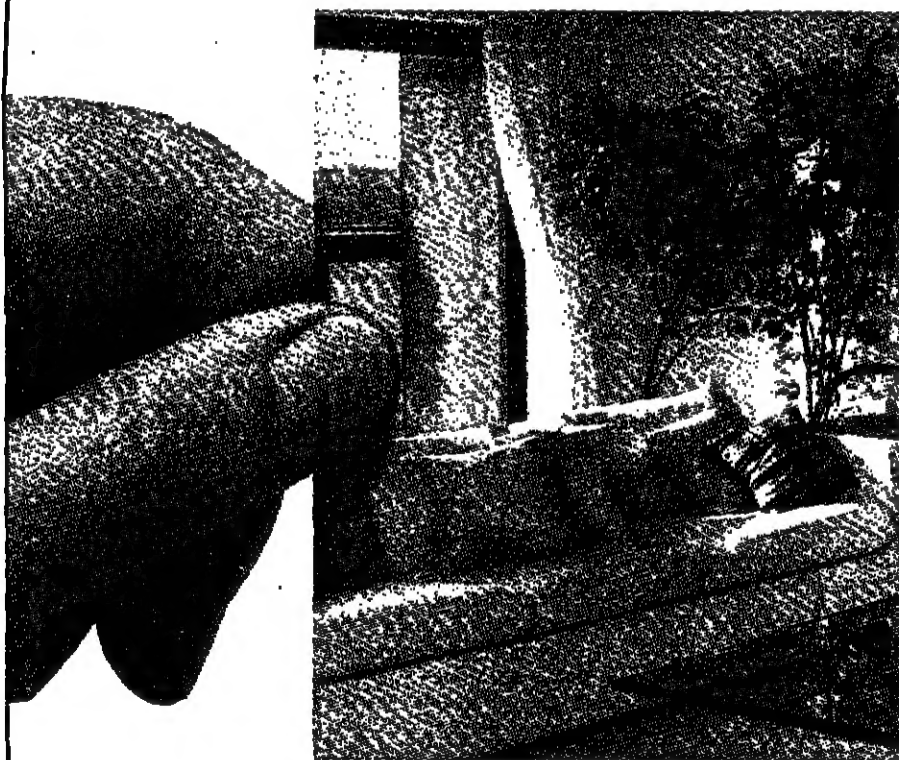
East Germany's newly re-named communist party suffered a further setback yesterday when it was alleged that the security services were still working under the auspices of the Interior Ministry.

The West German TV programme *Kontraste* accused Herr Lothar Ahrentz, the Interior Minister, of responsibility for the continued use of security cameras on the Alexanderplatz, favourite gallery point for demonstrations in East Berlin.

A meeting of the Council of Ministers in East Berlin agreed with opposition demands to set up a government commission to hasten the disbanding of the Office of National Security. A spokesman for the commission said yesterday that six million files on East German citizens had been found in the headquarters of the former Office of National Security, meaning that the service had spied on one in every three East German citizens.

All the files were held in quadruple and work is to begin today on destroying the computer discs on which they were filed.

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Capital gains and losses

Bonn sees future of empty houses

From Ian Murray, Bonn

My landlord and the Federal Press Office have come to the same conclusion: Bonn's days as a German capital are probably numbered.

Twice in the past week ministers have made reassuring noises that the federal buildings are here to stay, but as reunification fever takes hold on the country, they are drowned out by excited cries on all sides of "Berlin, capital of a united Germany".

My landlord, three months after signing a three-year extendable lease, appeared at the door with an apology and a letter saying that he was selling up. "All you journalists and diplomats will be moving to

● In the 1980s the Government decided that reunification was a long way off ●

Berlin before long," he prophesied. "The bottom will drop out of the rent market and I am trying to get rid of this before it is too late."

The press and information office, whose 700 employees have been spread all round Bonn down the years, have at last been promised a new and spacious office near the Bundestag.

The plans so far have cost about £5 million but the price of the new block on the banks of the Rhine was put at £80 million in the last federal budget.

Now the scheme is on ice because "we don't know if we will stay here or move to Berlin". Although the Government has promised to complete its recent and massive building programme in Bonn, it is waiting to see what happens about a national capital before committing more taxpayers' money to am-

bitious Rhineland schemes. Ironically, it was only in the 1980s that West German rulers abandoned hopes of an early united Germany with Berlin its capital again.

As befitting a federal republic with 11 largely autonomous states, several key offices were sited in far-off places - including Berlin.

Diplomats posted to "the small town in Germany" insisted on a special clause in their lease, giving them the right to cancel it at short notice because their governments lived in expectation of their needing to move to Berlin. This type of "diplomatic clause" has since become recognized internationally.

But in the mid-1980s the Government decided that the dream was still a long way from fulfilment.

Cranes sprouted along the B9 - the main road from the diplomats' dormitory of Bad Godesberg to Bonn - and a new ministry quarter was started. A museum for the history of the Federal Republic was agreed, along with a new art and exhibition hall.

At the same time an expensive renovation for the Bundestag, which meets in a converted school with no front door, was begun.

But the pressure to move to Berlin is growing daily, so Herr Hans Daniels, the Mayor, is mounting a campaign to try to keep the capital - in both senses. For being West Germany's centre has transformed the economy of this sleepy university town and it fears ruin if Berlin comes back into its own.

At least 100,000 people rely for their job on Bonn's being the federal capital - one in three of the working population. There is virtually no other industry, and if the civil servants and diplomats left - to say nothing of the journalists - there would be a lot of empty houses round.

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Ortega heading for election victory as 'man of the people'

From Jasmine Di Giovanni, Selva Negra, Nicaragua

El Comandante, as President Ortega of Nicaragua is called by his *campesinos*, is suffering from a sore throat, one of the penalties of being on the campaign trail.

He accepts a glass of bitter ginger root and says that he is confident the Sandinistas can uphold the campaign promise "Todo sera mejor" — everything will be better — should they be victorious.

The slogan, which is plastered on billboards, T-shirts, babies, walls and baseball hats, throughout Nicaragua, was initially suggested at by members of the US-backed National Opposition Union as an admission of the difficult post-revolution years, but Señor Ortega sees it as a sign of renewed optimism.

"Once we have eliminated the war, we will be able to advance more rapidly economically," he said.

Despite an economy racked by five years of a US embargo and eight years of war, President Ortega still has a 2-1 edge in the run-up to the elections — over Señora Violeta Chamorro, his conservative opponent. Having campaigned heavily, he believed he had managed to hold on to his decade-long leadership because of his "constant and direct contact with the people".

In an interview last week in a rustic mountain chalet high in the foggy mountains of Selva Negra in the Matagalpa region, the 44-year-old President said: "A lot of the reason for the success of this cam-

paign has been the type of communication that I have established with the populace.

"We have taken measures to help defend the economy and there have always been intense discussions with the people before and after any measures were taken."

He pauses briefly and fingers a set of glass worry beads. "I have never, in any way, attempted to give them a miracle solution."

It has not been the easiest of campaigns, despite President Ortega's new look which prompted one journalist to borrow President Bush's campaign slogan and refer to him as a "kinder, gentler Ortega".

Gone is the military uniform, worn constantly during his visit to Britain last May, and his ominous shaded glasses. In their place are cowboy boots, jeans and contact lenses, all of which give him a more relaxed air. Instead of slinging a rifle, he poses with babies.

But the revolutionary rhetoric has not lost any of its familiarity. President Ortega has waged a continuous battle against US intervention in Central America.

"After the 1984 elections, the United States was still unsuccessful at isolating Nicaragua from the international community, and that obliged them to continue diplomatic relations with us," he said.

"If they had been able to isolate us, they probably would have, and said that the elections weren't legitimate, and that it was necessary to intervene for diplomatic pur-

poses. They tried to put conditions on us to see if they could actually break relations between us and other countries. But if they couldn't do it then, they can't do it now."

"These elections are setting a precedent. The UN, the OAS (Organization of American States) coming here — it's never happened to any other nation."

Señora Chamorro, currently immobilized after a knee operation, promises renewed relations with the US as well as the immediate abolition of the military draft.

They are pledges that might have appealed to many Nicaraguans, who are tired of the weakened economy and the hardship of war.

But, despite the fact that Doña Violeta, as she is called, is the widow of a much-loved man (Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, editor of the daily *La Prensa*, who was murdered by allies of General Anastasio Somoza in 1978) she is seen by many as a figurehead who does not have the political capacity to lead a country.

President Ortega, born in La Libertad, a small town in the Chontales region, was heavily influenced by both the Catholic Church and his parents, who each spent some time in jail under Somoza. "They were both Sandinistas, but they were also Catholics, and the Christian influence probably had the most weight in my mind," he said.

He adds: "I could be with the people for hours and hours, just listening to them. One learns, one really learns."

Contras force out leader

By Charles Bremner

Junior officers in the American-backed Contra army have ousted their hardline leader in an attempt to clear the decks before the elections in Nicaragua next month.

Reports from Honduras, where the 10,000-strong rebel force is based, said Colonel Enrique Bermúdez, a former colonel in the National Guard of the late Anastasio Somoza, had been forced to step down by a group of subordinates headed by Señor Israel Galesano Cornejo, aged 29, the chief-of-staff, who uses the *nom de guerre* Comandante Franklin.

The move against the authoritarian commander came as Republicans in Washington signalled that the Bush Administration may fail to accept that the Nicaraguan election is as "certifiably free and fair" as it has been.

The Contra officers, hardened in eight years of battle with Sandinista forces, are said by Contra sources to want to decide for themselves the fate of the rebel army in the

increasingly likely event of a win by President Ortega's Sandinista Government in the February 25 elections.

Some 3,000 Contras are still operating inside Nicaragua, where they have been skirmishing with government forces. Witnesses blamed a Contra unit for an ambush that killed two nuns, one of them an American, on January 1. The Contras' political directorate, based in Miami, has disintegrated in recent months.

Under the Central American peace plan, the Contras, created by the Reagan Administration to wage war on the Sandinistas, were to be disbanded in return for fair elections.

As a result of the international scrutiny, the Nicaragua campaign has been more closely monitored than any election in history. The United Nations and the Organization of American States are among those who have flooded the country with observer groups to see fair play.

Strong arm of law quells cricket protest

From Ray Kennedy
Johannesburg



Police stopping Peter Magubane, a Time magazine photographer, covering cricket tour protests in Alexandra yesterday.

Safety fears grow

ANC rebels a threat to Mandela

From Gavin Bell, Cape Town

The South African Government has confirmed that right-wing extremists have threatened to kill Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress (ANC) leader, who is expected to be released this month.

Mr Adriaan Vlok, the Minister of Law and Order, said that various threats have been made against Mandela over the years by radicals on the right and by dissident factions of the ANC.

But the right had made more recent threats, "mainly centred around his release," Mr Vlok said. "They have been threatening to do certain things to him. We are concerned about his safety."

An authoritative source in the ruling National Party said the Government's ability to protect Mandela would be limited once he had rejoined his supporters.

He may be permitted to recruit armed bodyguards from within his own ranks, provided they acted discreetly, he said.

Sources close to the ANC said the task was likely to be

entrusted to members of the organization's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), who were not wanted in South Africa for specific acts of violence.

Mr Vlok rejected charges by the far-right Conservative

Washington (Reuters) — Pretoria may lift the 3½-year state of emergency in weeks, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, the Minister of Constitutional Planning, said yesterday. "I would say it is a question of weeks, a few weeks only," he said.

Explaining why the emergency was deemed necessary, he said it was the only way the police could make mass arrests without having to justify them in the courts. "You see, the Internal Security Act is not really suited to run large numbers of people. In terms of the state of emergency, it is easier to detain people in large numbers with less information available to the police."

"In other words, your actions are tested in court. The police have to submit to a court of law if you arrest a

man in terms of the Internal Security Act. Under the Internal Security Act you can detain a person, preventive detention, but it is more difficult."

He said that 59 people were in detention under emergency regulations, and 23 in terms of the Internal Security Act.

Mr Vlok said, however, that repressive measures could be only a "holding operation" and that a permanent political solution was required. "The security forces can hold the situation for a period of time, but not for an indefinite period," he said.

He also felt it was an opportune time for South Africans to discover that communism was a dying ideology.

"I cannot think of a better time to allow this (communism) in South Africa, so that people can see for themselves that communism is not an ideology on which you can build a prosperous future."

"If you really want to kill communism in the hearts and the minds of people, then the time is now."

Police baton charged about 100 blacks demonstrating against the Mike Gating cricket tour outside the British Consulate in central Johannesburg yesterday.

The police went into action in a crowded pedestrian mall where the consulate is situated as the leaders of the protest were being admitted to state their case.

The protesters claimed they had been driven away from the Wanderers cricket ground earlier, where the English team began a five-day "test match" against South Africa.

Meanwhile, the Rev Jesse Jackson, the American civil rights leader who arrived in South Africa on Wednesday, was making a triumphant tour of Soweto. At his first stop, a private educational centre, he told teachers not to talk down to their pupils.

"One of them could be a potential minister of justice," he said. "You people are teaching the architects and builders of a new South Africa." After that, Mr Jackson and his huge entourage were driven to a squatter settlement in Soweto's Dlamini district where he inspected shacks built of corrugated iron and cardboard sheets. He picked up a toddler dressed in a grubby T-shirt and shorts and holding him shoulder high, posed for photographs.

Earlier, the police had used teargas and batons against several thousand blacks gathering in Alexandra township on Johannesburg's northern border in preparation for a demonstration against the cricket tour.

On Wednesday, the Johannesburg chief magistrate refused permission for a legal demonstration.

A police spokesman said about 2,000 schoolchildren had been loaded on buses which were to take them to the cricket ground. He said: "The police confronted them and told them this activity was illegal. When they disembarked from the buses they started singing and dancing."

They ignored a warning to disperse and teargas was used, "whereafter the group dispersed peacefully," the police spokesman said.

The Alexandra township Civic Association condemned what it termed "the violent treatment used against people protesting peacefully."

Mr Moss Mashiki, organizer of the anti-tour National Sports Congress, said that 30 people had been admitted to a clinic after the police action.

Earlier, the Freedom in Sport organization, which supports the tour, had based in several hundred black spectators to the cricket ground.

Match report, page 40

WORLD ROUNDUP

Pollution alert on BP oil spill

Anti-pollution experts from BP were yesterday helping to clean up a large oil slick threatening the Californian coast after an American oil tanker was holed (Michael McCarthy writes). More than 1,000 tonnes of oil spilled from the American Trader when a tank ruptured as it prepared to discharge oil at a pipeline terminal two miles off the Golden West refinery at Huntington, south of Los Angeles.

The oil formed a slick 400 yards wide and nearly two miles long, threatening beaches and wildlife. It was being contained last night in a big clean-up operation directed by the US Coast Guard. BP in London said yesterday that American Trading and Transport, the company owning the tanker, which was on charter to BP, had accepted responsibility, but the company's own US-based anti-pollution experts had flown to the scene.

Turkish pit disaster

Ankara — Sixty-three miners are feared to have died in Turkey after a pit shaft collapsed in a methane gas explosion near Mezfiton, 218 miles north-east of here (Rasit Gundilek writes). Three bodies were recovered from the pit. One of those injured was said to be in critical condition. Despite a statement by Mr Mehmet Yazar, the government spokesman, that there was practically no hope left for those trapped as a fire raged in the shaft, the miners' families waited beside the pit. The heat and carbon monoxide prevented fire-fighters and rescue teams from entering the shaft. Mr Yazar said, adding that air vents were being closed to put out the fire. The disaster was the third biggest in Turkey in 30 years.

Bofors bank inquiry

Geneva — The Indian CID, investigating an \$824 million order for 410 howitzers placed with the Swedish Bofors company in 1986, has initiated procedures for access to records of six numbered bank accounts in Geneva and Zurich, frozen last month by the Swiss authorities at the Indian Government's request (Alan McGregor writes). Charges of corruption have been brought in Delhi against several people, including a Swede. If the charges are accepted as punishable also under Swiss law, the banks will be required to provide the requested information.

Sweden bans strikes

Stockholm — The socialist Government here yesterday came into head-on confrontation with the trade unions by introducing Sweden's most draconian post-war deflationary package (Christopher Mosey writes). The package calls for a two-year freeze on wages, prices, rents and dividends, and bans strikes for a similar period. Mr Sture Nord, leader of a public sector union planning a stoppage by 100,000 workers next week, condemned the strike ban as "an extremely serious violation of fundamental trade union freedoms".

Falklands talks hope

Madrid (Reuters) — British and Argentine officials began two days of talks here yesterday on the Falkland Islands issue, hoping to clear the last obstacles to reconciliation after the 1982 war. Both sides said they hoped that the preparatory meeting would clear the way to the resumption of full diplomatic relations. Senior diplomats are set to take over the negotiations on February 14. Full restoration of ties has been blocked by Britain's insistence on keeping a 150-mile exclusion zone around the islands.

Hanoi blocks moves to send Vietnamese home

By Jonathan Brande in Hong Kong and Andrew McEwen in London

No more mandatory repatriation flights of Vietnamese boat people will take place for at least two weeks, it emerged yesterday, despite the increasing desperation of the British and Hong Kong Governments to act before the new "sailing season" begins.

Differing explanations of the delay were given in London and Hong Kong, but it appears that skilful if unsettling diplomacy by Hanoi is the most likely cause. The two Governments' anxiety to avert another huge influx of boat people has placed Hanoi in a strong position to make them pay even more of the resettlement costs than was agreed last year.

Mr Francis Maude, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, is expected to agree that new reception facilities will be built with British aid, when he visits Hanoi from February 18 to 21.

However, a radio station in Hong Kong reported that Vietnam would refuse to take back any more boat people yet because of the inept handling of the first mandatory repatri-

ation flight of 51 Vietnamese on December 12.

The report, by the journalist who revealed the timing of the previous flight, said Vietnam would continue to block any new repatriation at least until expanded reception facilities had been built.

Quoting Foreign Ministry sources in Hanoi, the radio said the Vietnamese authorities felt "deceived" by the publicity surrounding the first repatriation and the show of strength by the Hong Kong authorities. Sources in London confirm that Hanoi has



Mr Maude: To discuss next repatriations while in Hanoi

asked for there to be no publicity, but say it was told from the first that the British authorities had no power to control the press. The Hong Kong Government tried to keep the date of the flight secret and carried it out during darkness in the hope of avoiding journalists and photographers.

Despite these precautions, TV audiences saw about 150 prison staff in riot gear move in to take nine men, 16 screaming women and 26 children to the airport.

The sources confirmed that Hanoi has been refusing to approve passenger lists for mandatory flights.

Passport doubts: The offer of British passports for 50,000 Hong Kong families has not made people more confident of the future, according to an opinion poll published in the colony. The survey, conducted for the *South China Morning Post*, suggested that nine in 10 of the executives, professionals and entrepreneurs the passport package is aimed at influencing doubt it will work.

Cambodians flee as troops rampage through port

From Neil Kelly, Bangkok

Scores of mutinous armed Cambodian government troops rampaged through Koh Kong, a seaport in south-west Cambodia, for two days this week, terrorizing the inhabitants from Tuesday night until yesterday morning, according to Thai traders trapped there.

They said the soldiers had destroyed houses and other property in what appeared to be a display of hostility towards their officers and the Government.

Many of the population of 70,000 escaped in boats or fled into nearby hills. Some people were injured but the extent of casualties is not known. The Phnom Penh Government has not reported the incident.

When order was restored, the mutinous troops were put on board a ship which took them to Kompong Som, Cambodia's main port.

Mr Thanin Traivut, a Thai MP who has built up extensive trade with Cambodia and Vietnam through Koh Kong, was trapped in the town for two days. He said soldiers had run wild because they felt cheated. They were told

months ago that they would soon be sent home, but those promises had not been kept.

He said that before the mutiny, soldiers had been drinking in the town, where imported liquor sells cheaply.

After 15 years of isolation, Cambodia last year opened its doors to Western trade and free enterprise at Koh Kong, which has since become a thriving free trade centre. Profitable wheeling and dealing is in evidence, while communism is not.

Every type of consumer product goes through the port to the interior of Cambodia and to Vietnam. The outgoing exports are mainly primary products from Cambodia, particularly gems and teak.

Foreign military attachés in Thailand said the rebellion appeared to be the most damaging incident of its kind involving the Cambodian Army since doubts about its loyalty and morale arose after the Vietnamese withdrawal last year.

The mutiny has lent credibility to reports of large-scale desertions which are preventing a counter-offensive against

the Khmer Rouge and anti-government forces.

Corruption among military officers and government officials has badly damaged army morale.

Mr Hun Sen, the Prime Minister, recently appealed for more army recruits. Despite a ruthless conscription programme in which young men are rounded up at random, officials admit that the Army is not getting the manpower it needs to stop the advance of the Khmer Rouge.

PHNOM PENH: Mr Hun Sen said here yesterday that a settlement of the 11-year conflict in his country was near since all sides had agreed on a United Nations role in achieving it (AFP reports).

However he rejected a Khmer Rouge condition that the five permanent UN Security Council members be included in informal talks on Cambodia set for February 26-28 in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital.

Mr Hun Sen said that a UN peacekeeping force was unnecessary in the present situation, which was ripe for a solution.

Black Hebrews hope to come in from wilderness

From Richard Owen, Dimona

Mr Ben Ami Carter believes he is a Jew, and has been fighting a 20-year battle to prove it. Scenarios, including many Israelis, say that Mr Carter, bearded, with piercing eyes beneath a white woolly hat, is in fact a black American, a former bus driver and steel mill worker from Chicago who was once plain "Ben Carter".

Critics also say the community of "Black Hebrews" which he heads in the Negev desert is full of fellow blacks from the Chicago slums who have escaped the attentions of the police to come to Dimona, otherwise best known for its Dead Sea potash works and Israel's top secret nuclear research centre.

Mr Carter denies allegations of crime, however. He says his community is "peaceful, law-abiding and devoted to a righteous way of life based on the Bible". He says that in 1960 he heard a voice from

Heaven informing him that he had been chosen to take his people "out of bondage and into the Promised Land". The Black Hebrews, he maintains, have a right to live in Israel under the Law of Return. But Israel has deported many of the Black Hebrews as illegal immigrants. Now, after years of wrangling, Mr Carter and his followers seem about to reach a compromise with the authorities.

Israel's rabbis refuse to accept the Black Hebrews' claim to be Jewish; none of them have Jewish mothers, for example. The cult members rely on a few Bible passages referring to Ethiopians, which the rabbis have ruled to be insufficient evidence. But after protracted negotiations an official commission has been set up by Mr Arie Deri, the Interior Minister, to resolve the problem. The commission is still drawing up its report, but the indications are that the Black Hebrews will be

offered some kind of legal status, perhaps with the right to form an organic farming community.

Last summer Mr Deri broke new ground by meeting Mr Carter, who promised that the Black Hebrews

Jerusalem — Israel has developed a new anti-riot weapon to "meet stones with stones" — a Jeep-mounted cannon capable of firing egg-sized stones at a rate of 600 a minute (Richard Owen writes). Israel Radio said yesterday that the device had already been used experimentally in Ramallah on the West Bank.

would in future refrain from propagating "anti-Zionist views".

Giving the Black Hebrews a legal basis would certainly improve their living conditions as well as easing tensions with fellow residents in Dimona, who include not only a community of Ethiopian Jews but

also many of the immigrants from the Soviet Union now arriving in Israel in large numbers.

About 1,000 Black Hebrews live a meagre life in an abandoned immigrant absorption centre on the edge of town. They obey every command of Mr Carter, and refuse help from local health and education services. The homes are clean but hopelessly overcrowded.

The cult has its origins in Harlem, where at the turn of the century a few black Americans embraced Judaism because they regarded Christianity as a "white man's church". Judaism offered a biblical history of exodus from slavery to freedom. They believe they are descendants of Israel's lost tribes. Black Hebrews from Chicago first came to Israel in 1969, settling near the Dead Sea.

Customs such as polygamy mark them out from black Jews from Ethiopia (whose claim to Judaism is

not in doubt). Black Hebrews can have up to seven wives, and Mr Carter reputedly has three.

Tensions rose in the 1970s when the Black Hebrews refused a proposed Israeli compromise under which they would have agreed to be converted to Judaism. This was unnecessary, they argued, since they were Jews already. The US Embassy became involved when Israeli immigration authorities began to turn back bona fide American black citizens on suspicion they might belong to the Black Hebrew cult.

The Dimona Black Hebrews say the meeting with Mr Deri was in itself a sign that their status as illegal immigrants could soon end. They simply want Israel to be "a spiritual centre for all humanity, a light to the nations", Mr Carter says. But, just in case, he and most of his followers have formally renounced US citizenship to avoid deportation back to America.

February 8 1990

PARLIAMENT

Peers defeat attempt to stop embryo research

Peers overwhelmingly rejected an attempt to stop research on human embryos when they voted by 234 to 80 against an amendment tabled by the Duke of Norfolk to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill.

It was a free vote, the Government having promised that MPs and peers would decide the issue according to conscience. The Lord Chancellor emphasised the Government's neutrality when he wound up the debate.

The Duke of Norfolk (C) moved the amendment that he fully supported infertile treatment to enable married couples to have children.

In *in vitro* fertilisation, two or three embryos were created and one was implanted in the woman.

Lord Rawlinson of Ewell (C) supported the amendment and said that people would not

HOUSE OF LORDS

The amendment moved by the Duke of Norfolk was to leave out the first of two options provided by the Government to fulfil a promise made in the 1987 White Paper. The first would provide for regulation of treatment, storage and research on human embryos, the second would permit only treatment and storage of embryos. Both Houses have been promised a free vote.

To those who said that life commenced "after 14 days" he said: "Fourteen days after what? What made 14 days acceptable? Was the logic not to start at the beginning? He could not accept that man had a right to dispose of what was living and to take it and place it on a shelf and finally to destroy it."

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, said that he was delighted that the Duke had said how welcome were the advances made in fertilisation. But he had gone on to deny the very research on which *in vitro* fertilisation had been based.

The Duke rejoined that those who received children whom

they would not have had otherwise, while roundly condemning the research that had led to it.

Nobody claimed that all such defects could be avoided by such research, but that there were some cases where a defect might be identified before an embryo was implanted.

Peers owed it to the scientists to take seriously what they were trying to do, to respect their integrity and to provide them with a clear framework in which to work. "We do no good if our prohibitions are so severe as to be regarded by them as unreasonable and unjustified, and of such a kind to prevent potential valuable and responsible work." The amendment should be rejected.

Lord Widdowson of Dechmont said that he and most scientists accepted the 14-day limit beyond which research on the human embryo would be illegal. The inestimable benefits to human life that would undoubtedly spring from research being performed or contemplated on the embryo within that limit could not and must not be frustrated.

He accepted that important discoveries in molecular genetics had been made possible without embryo research, but opponents of research seemed unwilling or unable to appreciate that it was the next crucial step, bringing untold hope to the relatives of such patients, that could not possibly be achieved if such research was banned.

Those who talked about spare embryos being killed were indulging in "unjustifiable hyperbole".

It was clear that the remarkable developments in preventing Duchenne muscular dystrophy which could be made possible by embryo research could not be taken further by any form of animal experimentation.

Only work on the human embryo could properly yield the results on which so many infertile couples pinned their hopes.

"As a committed Christian myself, I believe the performance of such research under the 14-day limit and under the strictest control of a statutory

licensing body, and with all the safeguards which this Bill enshrines, is not only entirely compatible with the Christian faith but will have untold benefits for human health."

"While I understand the sincerely held objections of the opponents of research who believe that the embryo starts at conception, I find it difficult personally to see how anyone deeply concerned about the welfare of suffering humanity could fail to recognize the potential benefits of such research."

Lord Harrington (C) said that the House should be on its guard. Things were going on outside that peers should be aware of.

One group had been distributing a leaflet outside, containing a statement from a mother who said that she had a mentally handicapped child who also had a club foot, partial vision, epilepsy and other handicaps. The mother was quoted as saying: "I love her, but would give anything for her to have enjoyed a full life rather than the limited life that she must lead."

These were worthy sentiments, but this document illustrated clearly the lamentable way in which parents of handicapped children had been misled by "the experimentation lobby".

Peers must ask themselves how the mother could gain such a false impression about embryo biopsy. "We must be wary of this kind of campaign, based as it is on such misrepresentation, misrepresentation and manipulation."

It had been said that embryo biopsy would allow genetic disease to be wiped out, but it had not yet succeeded on human beings and might never do so.

Lord Ennals, Opposition spokesman on health, said that as a layman he found it hard to understand how warm-hearted, charitable, Christian people could say that this research was immoral, distasteful and wrong.

The Bishop of London, the Right Rev Graham Leonard, said that they were on a slippery slope and there was a danger that one day legislation would go beyond 14 days.



Uprating child benefit 'no help to poorest'

During bitter exchanges with Mr Roy Hattersley over child benefit, the Prime Minister insisted that a universal uprating would not help the poorest families, who would merely lose other benefits.

Asked to respond to criticism from a Conservative MP, she said, to local Labour protests, that the Conservative manifesto commitment was to pay child benefit, as now, direct to the mother. That had been upheld.

Mr Hattersley, deputy leader of the Labour Party, standing in for Mr Neil Kinnock who is in Germany, said that the promise in the manifesto had been broken over the past five years. Many low-income families were penalised by means-tested benefits. Much of the family benefit that was now means tested was only taken up by half the people

who needed and deserved it. Was the Prime Minister aware of the facts if she was, did she care?

Mrs Thatcher said that in the past two years extra help had been deliberately concentrated on poorer families.

People on income support and family credit, if they had merely had an increase in child benefit, would not have profited because it would have come off their income support or family credit.

Mr Hattersley said that Mrs Thatcher should answer her own backbenchers, who asked her last night to rescind a policy that gave tax concessions for free medical care with one that held down child benefit.

She should answer the points made by Mr Timothy Mason (Aylesbury, C) in Wednesday's social security debate, who said

that year by year the manifesto promises of her party, and his, looked increasingly threadbare.

Mrs Thatcher said that the Government was making available an extra £70 million to needy families through income-related benefit. That was especially helping the poorest families. They were spending more than £50 billion a year - that was more than £1 billion a week. "We win all ends up."

Mr Tom Clarke (Monklands West, Lab) said that the replies would be a great disappointment to seven million families and twelve million children.

Would the Prime Minister uprate child benefit in April, taking these last years into account, or did she intend to save up more and more money for an even more generous Budget for the rich?

Minister rejects BSE plea

AGRICULTURE

Mr David Maclean, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, resisted renewed pressure from both sides of the Commons to give 100 per cent compensation to farmers with animals suffering from bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). He said that all aspects of compensation policy were kept under review.

He denied that meat from BSE-infected animals was getting into the food chain.

Mr Ronald Davies, Opposition spokesman on food and agriculture, asked why Mr Maclean so obstinately rejected demands for 100 per cent compensation.

It seemed impossible to find a farmer, a veterinary surgeon or a local authority inspector who would deny that animals infected with BSE were entering the food chain.

Compensation at 100 per cent would at least make a start in dealing with the problem of clinically infected animals.

If Mr Maclean was prepared to accept the recommendation of the Tyrell committee and introduce random sampling of bovine strains, the public would have an indication of the extent of the epidemic. Or did Mr Maclean just not want the public to know?

Mr Maclean described Mr Davies's last remark as outrageous. The argument for farmers getting more compensation for financial loss was separate from protecting the human food chain, "and it is not right to suggest that BSE animals are getting into the food chain because we have taken preventive measures".

The Veterinary Record, the journal of the British Veterinary Association, had stated that there was no evidence that the compensation level was "encouraging farmers to shed off animals for slaughter and inclusion in the food chain".

Mr Maclean said that the human food chain was protected by a host of measures, particularly the official ban.

Wallace affair

Tories press for inquiry

The Government came under renewed pressure from Conservative MPs during business questions to hold deeper and wider-ranging inquiries into the "dirty tricks" allegations of Mr Colin Wallace.

There were cries of "no sense" when Sir Geoffrey Howe, Leader of the House, told them: "There have been, and there are now in progress, a series of inquiries into this matter affecting virtually every aspect of it."

The subject was first raised by Sir David Steel (Tweeddale, Berwick and Lauderdale, Lib Dem), who called for a wider inquiry into the misuse of information by Crown servants.

Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Defence, had said the inquiry by the defence select committee would be limited in scope, and Mr Wallace had questioned the accuracy of statements made by ministers of defence to the House only last week. Would he realize the urgency of this matter?

Sir Geoffrey replied that two

inquiries were taking place and the defence select committee had already indicated its intention to make one of its own. "We shall have to wait to see the extent of that inquiry."

Mr Jonathan Aitken (Thanet South, C), also calling for the fullest possible inquiry, asked if the Government would fully co-operate with the defence select committee.

Would that co-operation include the granting of immunity from prosecution for those Crown servants and former Crown servants who might be called before it to give evidence?

Sir Geoffrey said that any request made by the committee would be considered in the ordinary way.

Mr Richard Shepherd (Aldridge-Brownhills, C) said that many Conservative MPs did not understand the Government's reluctance to have a wider inquiry.

"Many of us would like to see this fundamental allegation, that strikes at our liberal democ-

racy, exposed and we look to the Government to facilitate that."

Mr Robert Rhodes James (Cambridge, C) said that there was a widely-spread concern on the Conservative benches. A proposal for a committee of privy counsellors to look at it appeared the most appropriate course.

Mr Rupert Allason (Torbay, C) said that last year the House had introduced a complaints procedure and a commissioner and tribunal for the security services.

The tribunal had declined to consider any complaint against the security services relating to events before December 18 last year. That was making a mockery of the Act passed last year.

Some MPs thought that it was a deliberate abuse.

Mr John Wilkinson (Ruislip, Northwood, C) said that it would not be acceptable if Mr King sought to prevent any Crown servant giving evidence to the select committee.

Egg ban would be illegal

The ban on British beef being operated by the West Germans was illegal under the Treaty of Rome and that was why Britain could not use a similar tactic to ban eggs from the Continent.

Mr David Maclean, Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said at question time.

The illegal use of European Community rules to ban the import of eggs would be totally unjustified.

Mr Maclean told the House that eight consignments of imported eggs had been found to be contaminated with *Salmonella* since April last year.

The member states concerned had been asked to take remedial action. In addition, Mr John Gummer, the Minister of Agriculture, had pressed for the speedy introduction of Community-wide measures against *Salmonella* similar to those adopted here.

Dr Lewis Moonie (Kirkcaldy,

Lab) said that increasing standards in egg production in this country had not been matched by a fall in salmonella among humans. "Would he not consider introducing similar regulations to the one Germany has applied to our beef?"

Mr Maclean said that we would have no justification under Community law for slap-banning a ban on imported eggs in this country, just as those countries had not slapped a ban on our eggs when the salmonella crisis had been at its height.

Mr Richard Allason (Newark, C) said that if the slightest trace of salmonella was found in this country, the farmer had to destroy his entire flock. Yet by the time "minimal" testing of imported eggs at the point of entry was completed the eggs had been distributed.

Mr Maclean said that that emphasized the necessity of a Community regime.

Mr Elliot Morley, an Opposi-

tion spokesman on agriculture, said that the Germans had used article 36 of the Treaty of Rome to stop British beef going into Germany. Why could we not use the same article to halt the import of suspect eggs?

Mr Maclean said that what Mr Morley had not mentioned was that the German action had been illegal.

Mr Michael Lord (Suffolk Central, C) said that for too long we had been playing the game. We had got to learn to bend the rules in the way that foreigners were doing. Farmers were entitled to feel angry.

Mr Maclean said that we should learn from other countries how they marketed their goods. British eggs were safer than imported eggs and it was perfectly legitimate to mark parcels of eggs as produced in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales or any country. That was a marketing initiative our producers could take.

Gummer denies 'horse' attack

Mr John Gummer, Minister of Agriculture, strongly denied at question time that he had accepted that the export of live horses from Britain for slaughter could be resumed.

Dr David Clark, Opposition spokesman on agriculture, accused him of throwing in the towel to the EC on this "unpalatable" trade.

Mr Gummer: I did not do anything of the sort. I would not have dreamt of doing it. They would fight in the EC to retain the present arrangements to stop the export of live horses for slaughter.

Food fears 'groundless'

Consumer fears over irradiated food were groundless because the Government was determined to enforce a workable labelling regime, Mr David Maclean, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, said at questions.

Parliament next week

The main business in the Commons next week will be: Monday: Debate on private member's motion on legal services. Property Services Agency and Crown Suppliers Bill, remaining stages.

Tuesday: Debate on government expenditure plans. Wednesday: Debate on Opposition motion on rail fares and services.

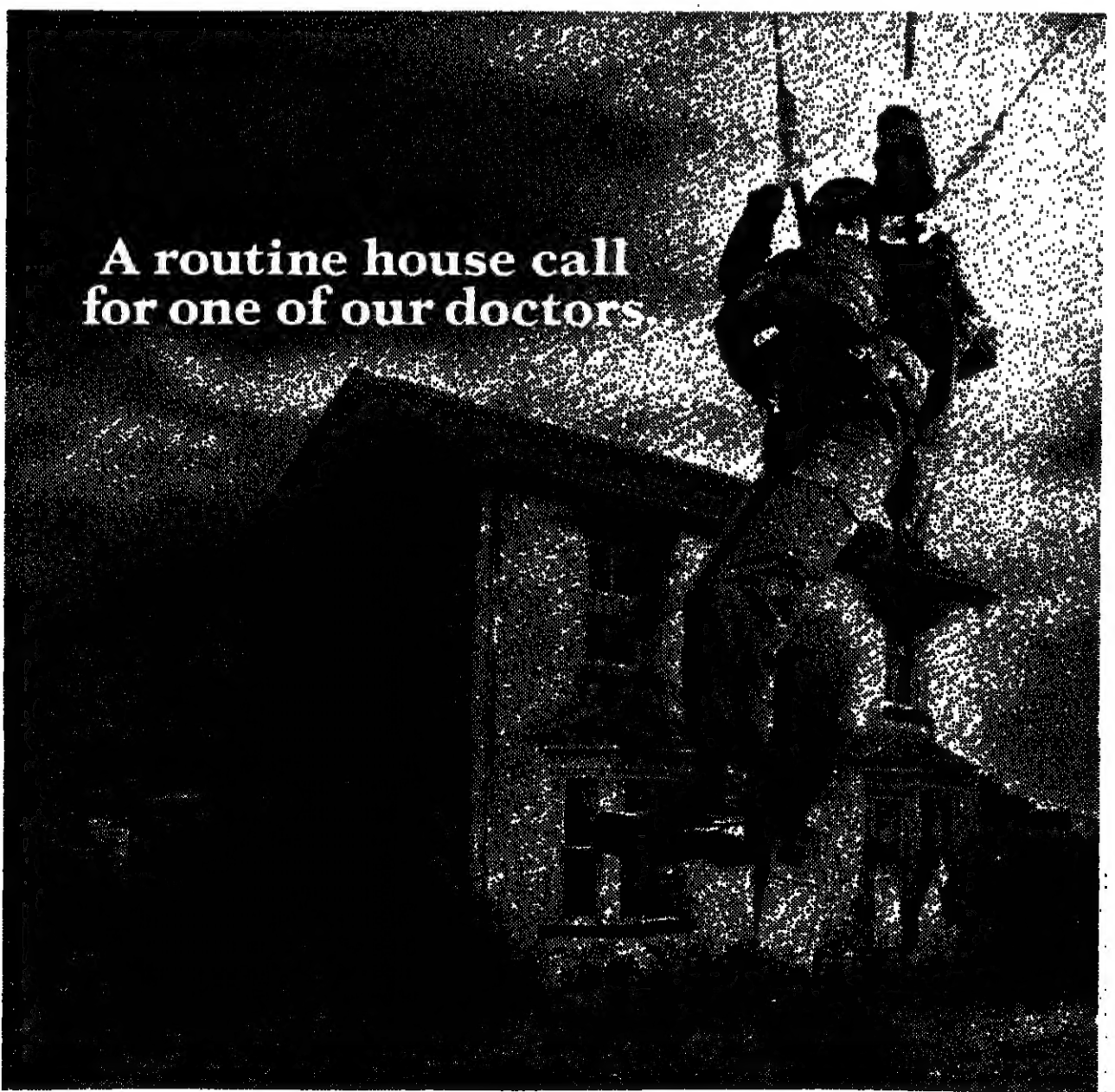
Thursday: Education (Student Loans) Bill, remaining stages. Friday: Private member's Bill: Sexual Offences Bill, second reading.

The main business in the Lords will be: Monday: Food Safety Bill, report.

Tuesday: Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, committee, third day. Wednesday: Debate on North Sea pollution. Thursday: Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and Gaming (Amendment) Bill, second readings.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Private members' Bills: Computer Misuse Bill and Abolition of Warrant Sales (Scotland) Bill, second readings. Lords (11): Coal Industry Bill and Motor Trade (Consumer Protection) Bill, second readings.



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Army Officer

Labour prepares for 1991 poll

By Nigel Williamson
Political Staff

The Labour Party is gearing itself up for the possibility of an election next year in the belief that the Prime Minister may decide to "test and run" when economic indicators begin to improve in the early part of 1991.

Government sources privately concede Labour's view that the economic outlook will continue to look bleak throughout this year but predict an upturn in the spring of 1991.

If that improvement in the economic outlook is reflected in an improved opinion-poll rating for the Government, the pressure to go for an early election will be strong, the Opposition believes.

Labour's economic advisers have told shadow cabinet mem-



Lord Callaghan: Delayed fatally in autumn of 1978.

bers that both inflation and the balance of payments are likely to have shown considerable im-

provements by late spring or early summer of next year and his cuts in interest rates will follow.

But they predict that this will be only a temporary "window" before economic indicators once again begin to turn against the Government.

Labour believes that the Government could be tempted to take advantage of what it thinks will be a very brief "window of opportunity" and call a snap election, possibly in June next year.

Party sources concede, however, that although Mr Thatcher has gone early on the last two occasions, it will take a sharp change in the Government's rating in the opinion polls for her to take the risk this time.

Unless the Government can begin to pull back the double-

figure lead that Labour is now enjoying, they believe that Mrs Thatcher would be left in position but to hold on until the expiry of her full term in June 1992.

Labour officials recall ruefully that Lord Callaghan of Cardiff (then Prime Minister) did not opt for an early general election in the autumn of 1978, when most commentators believed that the Labour Government could have won another term, but waited fatally until the next June.

One shadow cabinet member said this week: "We are certainly not ruling out the Government's going to the country before its full term is up."

"The economic situation is going to mean it has to pick its moment very carefully and, if it does so in 1991, Labour's campaign will be more than ready."

SPECTRUM

Scouting around for girls

The walls of a male citadel once thought invulnerable are crumbling — the Scout Association has decided in principle to admit girls of all ages. But will the move cause more harm than good? William Greaves reports

When thousands of boys from all over Britain descended on Crystal Palace 80 years ago for the first national scout rally, they had already learnt to "be prepared" for every eventuality except the one which happened — an invasion of girls.

It was not, in truth, a major infiltration. But it did consist of eight defiant young females and their message was emphatic. They had learnt the scout rules, they could wear the scout uniform, they intended to be scouts. It is reported that several of the boys whistled and that Robert Baden-Powell, considerably flustered, turned to his sister, Agnes, and said: "Do something about them, will you?" She did — and two months later the Girl Guides Association was officially formed.

As far as British youngsters under the age of 15 are concerned — girls over that age were admitted into the scout movement as Venture Scouts 14 years ago — that unbreachable barrier between the sexes was destined to remain intact through two world wars and eight decades of fast-changing social mores.

That wall did not exactly come tumbling down yesterday, but the Scout Association's announcement that the movement had decided in principle to admit girls at all ages at least revealed that a few bricks were beginning to wobble.

And one person still very much around to weigh the implications was 92-year-old Mrs Sybil Cardine, now an honorary associate of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and once one of that tiny army of rebels at Crystal Palace.

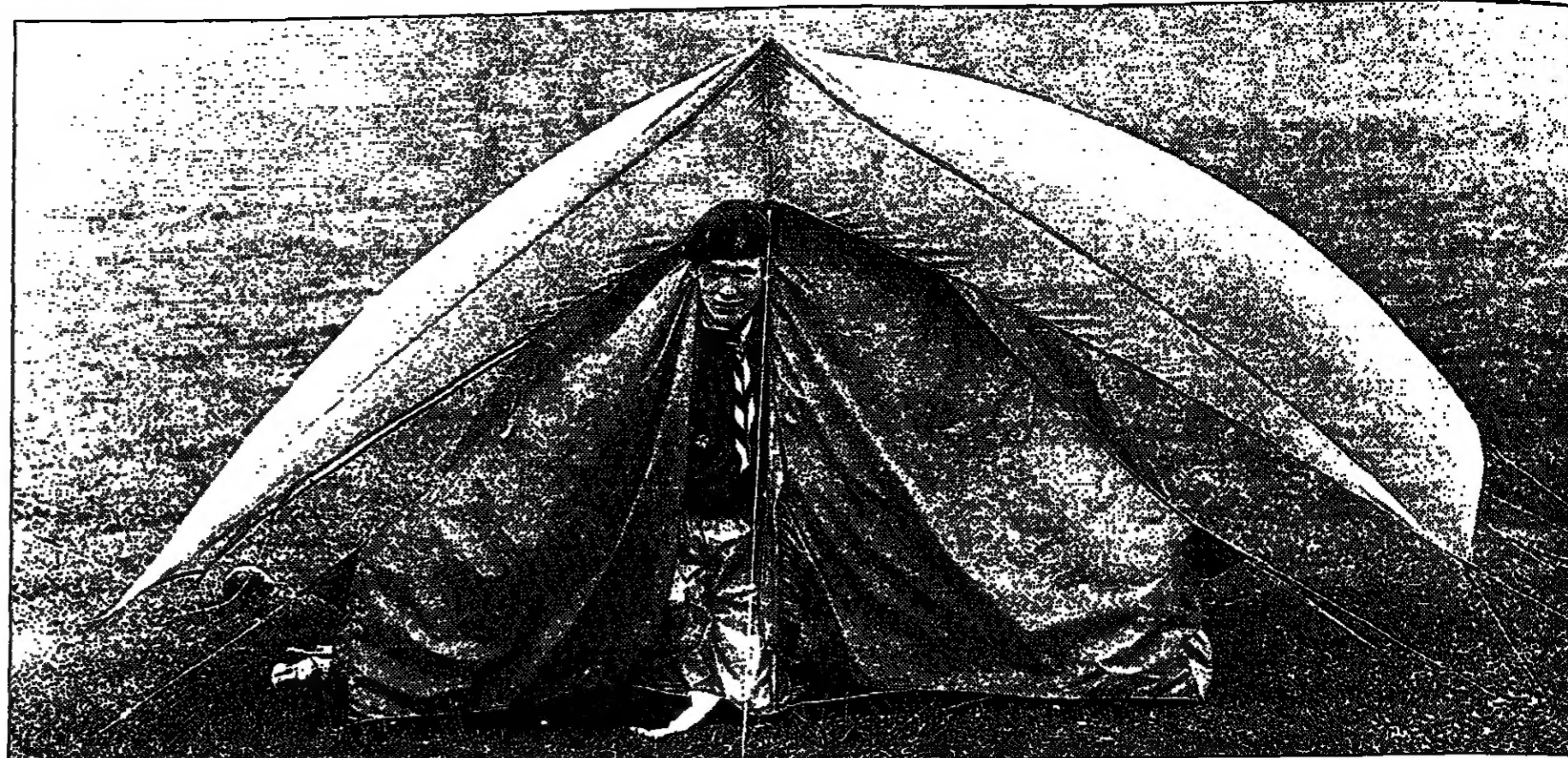
Was she delighted or disturbed

by the prospect of a new wave of female pioneers breaking into one of the last all-male strongholds — and doing so, this time, by invitation? "We have always got to move with the times," she said yesterday. "But if this does happen, then the guides must respond by opening their ranks to the boys."

Cynics would say, however, that there are other question marks to be directed towards the descendants of the Baden-Powell revolution. Has, for instance, the whole concept of scouting and guiding been left behind in an age of computer technology? (A scout may still be trusted, courageous and have respect for himself and others, but he is no longer, according to the current Law, under obligation to be thrifty, clean in thought, word and deed — or to smile and whistle under all difficulties.)

Baden-Powell's biographer, Tim Jeal, acknowledges this crisis of image. "It is ironic," he says, "that a movement which began with an almost primitive vitality has become regarded in some circles as an example of middle-class fuddism."

Contrary to popular belief, Jeal feels that BP himself would certainly not be turning in his grave at the prospect of a sexually united force. "Although he personally had difficulty communicating with women and preferred the company of boys and men, it had always been his intention that the scouts would be for boys and girls. It was only an Edwardian outcry against the coarsening affect that such a thing would have on gentle young ladies, and the number of editorials in important newspapers accusing him of trying to undermine the whole moral fibre



Bring on the girls? A modern scout (top), Lee Cammerer, in camp at Waterlooville, Hampshire, and Baden-Powell with some of his first recruits. Above, up-to-date badges awarded by today's organization

of the nation, which forced him to abandon the idea."

Numerically, at least, there is no evidence that scouting is on the decline. The scout movement has more than 600,000 young members between the ages of six and 20. And at the cub scout level (eight to 11), it attracts 25 per cent of the entire eligible population. Nor can it be accused of failing to keep up with the times, with badges available for such specialist attainments as computer science, aerodynamics and astronomy.

It is arguable, however, that the invitation to the other sex to "come and join us" should have come from the guides who, at 733,000 members, are the stronger of the two organizations and who attract an astonishing 41 per cent of all eight-year-old girls in the country, according to the chief commissioner, Dr June Paterson-Brown.

So why, if both organizations are able to prove their continuing relevance to society, should the Scout Association suddenly decide to alter the sexual status quo?

Derek Twine, the association's executive commissioner with special responsibility for training, and the member of the team which has been discussing the admission of girls for two years, insists that there is no wish to "poach" from the guides.

But was the real motive behind yesterday's dramatic volte-face, greeted with "surprise" and some ill-disguised annoyance by the Girl Guides Association, more of a public relations gambit to soften a reputation for chauvinistic attitudes? No, Twine says. "We are much more concerned with what's good for society and the country than we are with our own reputation."

IN AMERICA SEGREGATION REMAINS THE NORM

The American scout movement remains segregated because Congressional charters require that each branch devotes itself to one sex, although one 360,000-strong division of the Boy Scouts of America — which has a total membership of 4.3 million — is coeducational.

The Girl Scouts of the USA, founded in 1912, is the largest voluntary organization for girls in the world, with 2.5 million members between the ages of five and 17. Although still best known for baking billions of biscuits each year, girl scouts heading off to their evening meetings these days are just as likely to find themselves studying martial arts or discussing child abuse.

The increasing influence of women in society has also forced changes in the Boy Scouts of America, the male half of the movement. Sued by a parent last year, the organization quietly dropped its ban on women scout masters. Previously, women were able only to become "den mothers" for the younger Cub Scouts. But a divorced mother from Goleta, California, objected to the fact that the ban on female scout masters meant that her son could not go

camping, because his troop had no fathers or other adult males willing to take them.

The Boy Scouts now has about 500 women scout masters. In a gesture of equality, men were admitted as "den leaders". The Girl Scouts has always welcomed men as volunteers, and a growing number of troops are headed by male-female teams.

The Boy Scouts also allowed girls to join its career-oriented, high-adventure Explorer division, which caters to specialist interests. The division now includes boys and girls aged 14 to 20.

The boys' movement recently updated its handbook, first published in 1910. The new version, which went on sale last month, adds 23 pages of advice on drugs, child abuse and "environmentally gentle" camping to old favourites such as how to tell the difference between poison ivy and daffodils.

The revision has led some to speculate that the Boy Scouts of America may one day join its female counterpart. But that would require Congressional changes in both organizations' charters.

James Bone

IN EASTERN EUROPE NEW LIFE AFTER 40 YEARS UNDERGROUND

In Eastern Europe and parts of the Soviet Union, scouting — traditionally open to both boys and girls — has sprung back to life after more than 40 years underground. Baden-Powell's movement had barely become established in the Soviet Union when, in the 1920s, it was declared illegal. In central Europe scouting was banned, first by the Nazis and then, after the Second World War, by the communists. Last year, however, with the obstacle of illegality removed, Hungary led the way in reapplying for recognition by the World Scouting Organization, closely followed by Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Daniel Kummerman, a former Charter 77 dissident who is spearheading the revival of scouting in Czechoslovakia, believes scouts in the East will have to adapt if the movement is to maintain its appeal in a world being rapidly westernized. "We're very good at tying knots and sending messages in Morse, but our thinking hasn't evolved."

East European scouting, having been preserved underground by devotees through two generations, may have the edge on its western counterpart in terms

of popularity. It does not have amilitary image to shrug off and has always been closely tied to national sentiment. The first president of the Czechoslovak republic, Tomas Masaryk, was the Czech scouts' official patron until the war, and the movement acquired national martyrs when some of its leaders were purged in the Stalinist years of the early Fifties.

In its underground days, certain troops were able to continue operating by concealing their activities behind the front of the state-controlled Pioneer organization. The Pioneer pledge "to create Socialist Man" and, thus, by implication, to encourage atheism, was a cloak behind which traditional scouts' duties to God, country and individual conscience continued to be sworn, according to Kummerman.

As yet no steps have been taken towards establishing a nationwide movement in the Soviet Union which could be recognized by the WSO, although the state-controlled youth organization, Komsomol, no longer has a monopoly.

Lesley Chamberlain

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Going against the grain

The speech by the Prince of Wales at storm-battered Kew this week about saving the tropical rain forests has unleashed another storm, which shows signs of blowing much longer than the tempests which have been snapping the boughs of Kew's venerable specimen trees.

His Rainforest Lecture on Tuesday claimed that international organizations charged with halting deforestation were failing in their task, and came close to calling for a consumer boycott of tropical hardwood products. It has brought applause from green quarters, and aroused cries of protest from the timber industry.

"I feel very aggressive about the Prince's incitement to the British public to stop buying timber," says Geoffrey Pleydell, speaking for the Timber Trade Federation of Great Britain. "With respect, he has misunderstood the extent of Britain's influence. A boycott by British buyers would make no difference to the world-wide market, and might jeopardize the influence we are able to exercise at present to promote good conservation practices."

But Nicholas Hildyard, joint editor of Ecologist Magazine, says that calling for a boycott is "eminently sensible". He says that it is perfectly feasible to exploit forests on a sustainable basis, while at the same time ensuring they are not destroyed.

"But it is naive to talk about controlled, sustainable logging in countries run by corrupt regimes whose main interest is short-term profit. Until this situation changes, there needs to be a complete stop to logging in the primary forest, through international political and conservation pressure."

There is even dispute over whether the Prince was calling for a boycott at all. He accepted that it was possible to manage forests on a sustainable basis, for the benefit of their inhabitants and the world in general, and called for an international convention to define ground-rules for doing so.

"But we cannot simply go on talking," he added. How could consumers recognize products which had come from well-managed forests un-

The Prince of Wales launches a new controversy with his attack on organizations failing the rain forests



The forest in danger: but has the Prince the right answers?

til a labelling scheme was in place to identify them, he asked.

The Government has backed such a scheme, and a study into ways of setting it up is due to report in September. Implementation is likely to be slow and complex, however.

"Failing such a scheme, a cautious consumer is almost certainly going to be more inclined to avoid tropical hardwoods altogether," the Prince said.

Whether this is seen as a hint to the consumer to leave that mahogany chest of drawers unbought, or only as a warning to the international promoters of the labelling scheme to get their act to-

gether quickly, it points to a source of continuing controversy which any labelling scheme acceptable to the industry is almost certain to leave unresolved. For there is wide disagreement about what kinds of changes are needed if the future of the rain forests is to be safeguarded.

The definition of what is sustainable use can vary enormously, Pleydell says. "If the rules are laid down in a intrusive way, which the producers will not accept, you simply will not get their co-operation. If we stop buying their timber tomorrow, they will turn to the many other markets that exist, and ignore all that British forestry has to

teach about good husbandry in tropical contexts — cyclic felling, protection of watersheds to prevent erosion, and so on."

Both sides agree that the problem of the rain forests is much more than a matter of forestry. There is the tragedy of indigenous forest peoples, displaced by their destruction, and the almost irresistible political pressure of land-hungry farmers in countries with rising populations.

The Prince accused two international organizations, designed to control the destruction of the forests, of considering the question only in the context of timber production. He points out that one, the International Tropical Timber Organization, has articles of association which make no mention of the rights and needs of indigenous forest dwellers.

"If there is a genuine forest community with genuine customary rights, it should be protected," Pleydell says. "Governments of developing countries need to recognize their interests. We in Britain may be able to offer aid, but we cannot tell them how to run their internal affairs."

The other organization criticized by the Prince is the UN-backed Tropical Forest Action Plan. "It is not true that the plan considers the problem only in the context of timber production," says David Cooper, information officer for the United Nations Association. "But it is true that its purpose is not so much to save the forests as to provide sustainable income for the countries concerned, as the best means of reducing pressure on the forests. We might agree with the Prince that it would be better if people were not moving in from other parts of Brazil, for instance, in search of land. But we are trying to manage a bad situation in terms of what is possible."

In the eternal argument between radical action and pragmatism, both the Prince and his critics claim to offer the right balance between idealism and practicality. The question is how much will be left of the rain forests by the time it becomes apparent which of them is right.

George Hill

هكذا من الأصل

FRIDAY PAGE

'I don't see why we should stop athletes taking steroids'

I was the closing minutes of last week's *Any Questions*. A lady in the front row had the final question and, as I remember, it was to do with the "business" of banning an entire team of weightlifters from competition simply because two Welshmen had been caught out using anabolic steroids. On my right, I could hear the articulate voice of David Mellor deploring steroids and asserting that his department would be "listing" them. Ministers, I thought, are never more at peace than when announcing a new prohibition. Then I heard the crisp voice of my favourite presenter: "Barbara, said Jonathan Dimbleby, 'what do you think?'

If I were in court, I would plead to be seized by an irresistible impulse. I was provoked, I would argue, by the cloying sentiments about me. "I don't see why," I began earnestly, "we should stop athletes from taking these steroids at all." When I woke up I was in Mr Mellor's car driving back to London. He was on the telephone to his wife. "She thought you were

good," he said in a kindly, ministerial manner, "until that last question."

John Goodbody, *The Times*'s sports news correspondent, has written extensively and knowledgeably about anabolic steroids. *The Times* itself is in favour of making possession of them a criminal offence. As I understand it, there is a disagreement between the Civil Servants at the Home Office, who do not feel that anabolic steroids are a social problem requiring criminalization, and the Department of the Environment, where Sports Minister Colin Moynihan and his worker-bees feel possession must be made a criminal offence.

At the moment, anabolic steroids are a controlled drug, like any other substance that is not available to the public except by a doctor's prescription. One fully approves of this. Steroids are available in some European countries over the counter, but this seems to me to lack common sense. Most users cannot make an informed judgement about the taking of numerous substances,

from penicillin to Valium, without medical advice, and it is needlessly harmful to make such medication available to illiterate users.

Steroids may be useful in treating some ailments, but they can be dangerous if wrongly administered. The biggest danger is to young people who, in an attempt to grow muscles like their favourite sports hero's, may take them before they have finished growing. This can do all sorts of harm including premature closing of the long bones. The minute you make a drug unavailable except by prescription, you have solved most of the problems. All you have to worry about are the illegitimate pushers.

Making possession of a drug a criminal offence is quite another matter. I am unclear about why we should do this, apart from fashions in public hysteria. There has been talk of steroids causing psychotic behaviour and being responsible for acts of random violence. Indeed, the use of steroids is now surfacing as a defence in criminal assault cases. But there has been absolutely no scientific



BARBARA AMIEL

study of the relationship between steroids and psychotic behaviour. It is not good civics, one feels, to base public policy on an experimental hypothesis or on a few American television shows keen on hyping steroids as a new psychotropic substance.

Not being a medical person myself, I am in no position to

discuss the further question of whether steroids actually help sportsmen or simply give them a feeling of confidence, or whether use of them under medical supervision is harmful or not. Expert opinion on this is divided. I understand the Home Office advisory council on the matter cannot agree on this either. But once we have agreed that steroids should remain a prescription-only drug, we can turn to the separate questions of whether it should be used by athletes under medical supervision, and what the penalties should be if they break the rules and use it in events where it is outlawed.

As I understand it, the argument against using steroids is that (a) it is dangerous to the athletes, whose quest for the fastest time or highest jump will always lead them to overuse the drug, and (b) competitive games are there to challenge the natural abilities of our athletes, not to see how fast a drugged person can run. Neither of these arguments, it seems to me, holds up. There is nothing safe about the

way our athletes train now for competitive games. They put themselves on punishing regimes, diets and a way of life that results in torn muscles, dislocated bones, tendon and joint disabilities, and early death for some. Our weightlifters, for example, are not ordinary men, they are gladiators; our young swimmers do not grow up like normal children, they are bred for the purpose. Have you seen a marathon runner at the end of a race? Just as a Formula One racing car doesn't use ordinary petrol, I'm not sure why our top competitors shouldn't use whatever special substances they need to do their best. It seems to me utterly hypocritical to denounce steroids as unhealthy, when the whole punishing regime is clearly dangerous in itself.

If an athlete wishes to take an additional risk and know the risk, I cannot see why he shouldn't be allowed to do so. It is a totally different matter that if they break the rules in a sporting event they ought to pay the penalty. But if we wish to use the criminal law - in addition to the penalties imposed

by the sporting organizations themselves - I don't think the correct charge is possession of an illegal substance. Using the criminal code in this manner to punish an athlete is a wrong use of the law.

Since a great deal of money is involved in the endorsement of commercial products by winning athletes, I think there is a more logical remedy. If you take steroids, you put your competitors at a financial disadvantage because, by winning, you not only take away the glory, you also take away the money. In that case, I would find nothing wrong with charging the steroid-user with fraud for putting another athlete who was honest at financial risk.

In the meantime, I think it might be more realistic to have two sorts of competitions: we could have the steroid Olympics, and we could have the clean Olympics. That might finally tell us whether all that muscle mass that accumulates on our steroid-popping weightlifters really does much more than make them look like some monstrous nightmare out of a fetishist's fantasy.

Houston police cheered when they heard their boss was a woman.

Martin Fletcher investigates

Houston is a rough, tough city. Its police headquarters reflects that. An ugly, squat concrete building, it is divided by a tangle of freeways and flyovers from the clunk of soaring, mirrored skyscrapers that rise dramatically from a Texan plain to form the city's heart.

The police chief's office is at the rear of the third floor, plush, but windowless, reached through a bare grey corridor. A Stars and Stripes and the Lone Star flag of Texas provide a suitably grand backdrop.

Last week, the new incumbent sat in a large swivel chair at a huge expanse of desk. She was wearing a bright red jacket and skirt and was surrounded by flowers from well-wishers. "I was stunned," said Mrs Elizabeth Watson of her appointment. So was the rest of the nation.

A month after women soldiers in Panama fought in battle for the first time, another bastion of male exclusivity had suddenly, and unexpectedly, fallen. For the first time a woman had been chosen to lead the police force of a large American city, the fourth biggest in the country.

When news of Watson's appointment broke, the city's patrol car radios crackled with excitement. "Betsy, if you're out there - congratulations!" one excited officer whooped into his transmitter. "Thank God. A real police officer," exclaimed another.

The delight was felt throughout America. "This is like the first woman in Congress or the first woman in the state legislature," said Dr Susan Martin, expert on women and policing. "Police work is typically one of the most male-dominated professions. For a woman to achieve the position of chief in one of the largest departments



Helping police with inquiries: Elizabeth Watson ran into male resistance early in her career, now they are thankful for a "real officer"

The toughest cop in the Lone Star state

in the country is a major event.

But probably no one felt more pleasure than a certain traffic cop, Sergeant Robert Watson. "His colleagues call him Mr Chief," said his wife and boss. Her husband insisted she took the job, which is worth \$51,000 a year. "He's very much secure in who he is and what he does and the teasing doesn't bother him. He's well liked and has been very supportive of me throughout my career."

Watson is aged 40 - one of America's youngest police chiefs - and has children aged nine and four. She is tall, trim and fresh-faced with short black hair, and self-deprecating humour. She has not yet acquired her police chief's

uniform, she explains. No one had thought to design one for women, so she did it herself.

They affectionately call her "By-the-book Betsy" in Houston because of her attention to detail. In a profession dominated by men - fewer than 10 per cent of the force are female - she has risen fast. Bora to a family of Philadelphia policemen, she joined the Houston force as a graduate in 1972 and discovered that women were barred from all uniformed assignments. She became a member of the juvenile division where, to add insult to injury, she had to advise male officers by radio on how to handle incidents involving juveniles.

She moved on to the jail division where, despite her

policy of not dating fellow officers, she met her husband. "It happened by accident. It was very innocent. He was a co-worker and we used to have breakfast. There was never the notion that he was formally asking me out," she says.

Watson was promoted to detective on her wedding day in 1976, became Houston's first female captain in 1984, and the first female deputy chief with her own command station in 1987. It was more than 10 years before she managed to bludgeon her way on to patrol work. A captain finally allowed her to do nightshifts in one of Houston's roughest areas, but only because he could find no male takers. She wanted the job, she

says, to test for herself the deeply entrenched view that unless you had driven the streets you were no genuine cop.

She encountered "real animosity" from the male officers. "There had never been a female lieutenant on patrol and it was very unpopular." But after six months she was promoted again.

She has never been shot at or assaulted, but neither are most officers. She remembers being allowed to go to arrest one suspected thief at a petrol station because the warrant said his right leg was amputated. To her alarm, she found he had lost merely a foot, but still managed to talk him into going quietly.

There were three more senior male contenders for the

police chief's job, but Watson was given it over their heads by Houston Mayor Kathy Whitmire. Whitmire admitted she appointed a woman with "trepidation", and Watson says she woke the next morning wondering whether to change her mind.

Her 600 sq-mile beat is close to the Mexican border and so drug-ridden that President Bush has just named it one of five "high-intensity drug trafficking areas" eligible for special federal funds. It averaged between one and two homicides a day last year, two-fifths of these drug-related. Drugs worth \$47 million were seized on its streets in November.

She will have a budget of \$200 million (£114 million) and 4,000 officers, but she is inheriting a force bitter about poor pay and understaffing - a legacy of the mid-1980s oil price crash which brought Houston to its knees - and convulsed by two recent cases in which officers have shot black drivers.

One further headache: Houston plays host this June to Mrs Thatcher and other western leaders attending the world economic summit. Watson will be ultimately responsible for their security.

Watson got the job because of her deep commitment to the concept of what she calls "neighbourhood-orientated policing", a commitment shared by the mayor. She is not a cop of the old "lock 'em up" school. She does not measure success by tickets issued or arrests made. "We have to marshal the energies of our citizens and understand that crime is not just a police problem, it's a problem of society which we have to work together to solve," she says. "We have to be more creative in building an environment where crime is not likely to flourish."

Chief Watson seems destined to rewrite the brief and so far non-too-illustrious history of women police chiefs. Before her appointment, the largest police force to have been headed by a woman was that of Portland, Oregon. Penny Harrington was forced to resign after only a few months in the shadow of charges that she and her husband had alerted a friend suspected of cocaine trafficking.

Fruity fashions

REX FEATURES

Sarah Burnett's elaborate, multi-coloured knits prove that the use of natural dyes need not limit fashion designers to a palette of sludge. Fourteen years ago she perfected a technique of using natural materials - tropical fruits, redwood, goldenrod and walnuts - to create brightly coloured wools for stylish jackets, cardigans and sweaters, "long before anyone suggested it might be more ecologically sound than traditional dyes". Later this year she will be selling the wools for home knitters to make up her designs; meanwhile, until March 1, 40 of her woolly works of art adorn the walls of the Hinchcocks craft gallery, 10 Chapel Row, Bath BA1 1HN. Each design is a one-off, but a catalogue featuring favourite styles is available from the Natural Dye Company, Stanbridge, Wimbome, Dorset BH21 4JD (0238 840549).

Trunk call

All you have to do to help save the elephant is listen. A phoneline has been organized by the conservation group Elefriends, featuring Virginia McKenna and her son Will Travers, elaborating on the plight of the endangered giant. Updated every two days with the latest news on the worldwide effort to save the elephant from destruction by poachers, each three-minute phone call will generate 50p for Elefriends to help fund anti-poaching patrols and conservation in the field. A similar project in the US has already raised much-needed cash for whale preservation. The Elephant Line can be reached on 0898 338329.

Power award

Sustain-Ability, consultant to business and the driving force behind the expanding list of green consumer publications, is helping to sponsor this year's Debbie Bunce Environmental Travel Award, established to commemorate a young employee in the Central Electricity Generating Board's Corporate Environment Unit who was killed in a flying accident in 1988. Applicants

ECOSPHERE

News on environmental issues



must be undergraduates preparing their final dissertations or postgraduate research students working in the field of electricity and the environment in Europe. Details and application forms are available by sending an a/c to the UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development (Debbie Bunce Memorial Award), 12 Upper Belgrave Street, London SW1X 8BA (01-245 6441).

Plastic power

Procter & Gamble is test-marketing a product in Canada and on the Continent which saves the consumer money and reduces landfill waste. Enviro-Paks are a pouch packaging system which uses from 70 to 85 per cent less plastic than rigid bottles of liquid detergent, dishwashing liquid or fabric softener. After the first purchase of the bottle, consumers can refill it from light, squishy plastic pouches. Since they use less plastic, the consumer saves 15 per cent on the regular retail price, and in Canada it is estimated that the use of refills will reduce the number of plastic bottles thrown away each year by five million.

Storm damage

In the wake of appalling woodland devastation, the National Trust has relaunched its Trees and Gardens Appeal, established in the aftermath of the 1987 hurricane. Angus Stirling, the trust's director general, says: "We have not lost as many trees as last time, but the damage is more serious - particularly to the NT gardens in the West Country. Many NT gardens are defenceless against future weather horrors after losing valuable woodland windbreaks. Donations or requests for covenant forms can be addressed to National Trust Trees and Gardens Appeal 1990, Freepost, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 6ER."

Josephine Fairley

Ashkenazy the informer



THE TIMES ON SATURDAY IN COLOUR

Vladimir Ashkenazy, the Soviet pianist and conductor, reveals in *The Times* tomorrow how he became a reluctant informer for the KGB. Talking to Ray Connolly about his childhood and growing up, he says: "They came to me and said they'd appreciate it if I'd tell them what the foreign students did, what their interests were and what vices they had. I was frightened; I thought 'Oh my God, what will happen to me if I don't help them?'

Ashkenazy also recalls the day Stalin died. "The loud-speakers were all playing funeral music and saying how

we had lost our father and leader, and the people were all standing round like sheep. I had to go to a music lesson at my teacher's house because the school was closed. When I got there I said how terrible it was that this had happened, and she whispered 'No. It's good. Now there might be some improvement.' I just couldn't believe that anyone could say that, because my parents would have been too scared."

Also in the Saturday Review, Jonathan Meades reports on his visit to the restaurant at the Tate Gallery, where he detected the unmistakable whiff of Touriste Boarde Englishry. He urges the Tate's director to transform the restaurant into a showcase of the country's new-found culinary prowess.

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TIMES DIARY

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

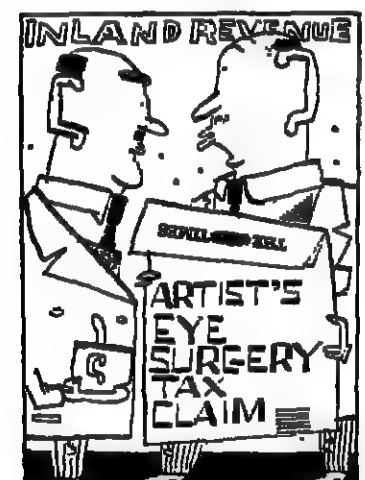
Two-and-a-half years after the Commons decided MPs could claim salaries for their secretaries and research assistants on public funds only if they lodged contracts of employment with the Westminster authorities, 333 - fewer than half the members - employing 523 staff, have complied. The Westminster branch of the TGWU, the union to which many Commons secretaries belong, says that Labour MPs are just as bad as their Conservative counterparts. Although, theoretically, salaries should not be paid on behalf of members until they comply, the Westminster fees office tells me that no one's cash has yet been cut off, and they are continuing to "pursue vigorously" MPs who have failed to provide the contracts.

Bernard Ingham, the Prime Minister's press secretary, got very annoyed at the press gallery luncheon this week with journalists who fail to report what Mrs Thatcher says, preferring to interpret what they think she meant. To ingratiate myself, I therefore propose to go one better and report not only the Prime Minister's exact words but the way she says them. Take for example, Nelson Man-day-la. As Ingham also castigated diarists for never checking facts, I rang the African National Congress for the approved pronunciation. Mrs Thatcher has got it wrong, a man told me. The black community rhymes the name with "cellar". The BBC had checked and got it right. He couldn't understand why Downing Street had not bothered.

My thanks to Green Magazine for this. On December 29 last year, Tony Baldry, the Tory MP for Banbury, wrote to a constituent who had asked about potential hazards from the atomic energy station at Harwell: "I don't think that I have the background on which I could sensibly comment on any of your observations or findings". Five days later Baldry was appointed by the Prime Minister as Under-Secretary of State for Energy with special responsibility for coal, electricity - and, yes, nuclear power.

The announcement by the Transport Secretary, Cecil Parkinson, on Wednesday that the rail line to Lichfield is finally to be electrified obviously has nothing to do with the impending Staffordshire Mid-election, or the fact that its electors will benefit. But that has not prevented Graham Allen, the Labour member for Nottingham North, expressing the mischievous hope that a Tory MP in Nottinghamshire will resign so that the line from Nottingham to St Pancras can be electrified, too...

BARRY FANTONI



"At least rock musicians will never get away with claims for their ears"

Spare a thought for members of the Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs. As part of their investigation into policing in the EC, they were to visit Rome in June - and several hoped that between their diligent inquiries they might find a little time to see the odd World Cup football match or three. Alas, the visit has had to be postponed, for none of the senior police officers they hoped to meet will be available. They will all be much too busy policing the World Cup.

Labour's left-wing veteran, Eric Heffer, retiring from his Liverpool Walton constituency at the next election, has been named to national party officials that Peter Kilfoyle, the party's full-time organizer in the North-west, is after his seat. Heffer, who says in the current issue of *Labour Briefing* that events in Eastern Europe have finally proved Trotsky right, is understood to be less than delighted about the prospect of being succeeded by a man known on Merseyside as the "scourge of Militant". But if Kilfoyle is successful, Heffer will only have himself to blame. Until 1982 Labour did not allow its full-time officials to seek parliamentary selection. The prime mover in persuading the national executive to liberalize the ruling was, you've guessed, Eric Heffer. Al, but he tells me he only ever intended the dispensation to apply to press officers and researchers, never to organizing staff.

It may be counted a major stroke of good fortune that, on Wednesday, the Princess of Wales poked her hand through the right hole: "DI GRABS JEW'S EAR!" is not a headline one would care to see exciting the world's wire services. In the event, what the radiant fingers groped for, clasped, and indeed correctly identified, was, as an elephant's molar. I know this, because an hour later I did two-thirds of that myself. I fell only at the final hurdle, but I can live with it. I tell myself that HRH must have felt many an elephant's tooth in her time, all those tropical tours, all those inaugural buns popped in when opening this or that zoological garden, all those chums, doubtless, with backyard enclosures of their own. The soft Hampshire evenings echoing to the trumpeting of pachyderm and scion alike as the tuxedoed guests strolled

When President Gorbachov and Chancellor Kohl meet in Moscow tomorrow, the key question on their agenda will be: "Can a united Germany belong to Nato?" The comments of Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet foreign minister, on Wednesday suggest that Moscow may be prepared to accept just that. If it does, there are some signs that Gorbachov may be about to get into deeper trouble than any even he has yet encountered.

Gorbachov prevailed this week over his rivals in the Communist Party leadership, but his victory may contain the seeds of his downfall. The end of the party's "leading role" is speeding the day when the office of General Secretary - the autocratic office through which Gorbachov effected such momentous transformations - will have become politically irrelevant. Gorbachov will have abdicated his institutional and ideological throne and will be answerable to the Russian people to them only because the Russians will be the only people, in what once was the Soviet Union, who will even be interested in his answers. And the Russian people are unlikely to be fond of a man whose *perestroika* failed, whose *glasnost* exploded, and who entertains German leaders in Moscow to help

Conor Cruise O'Brien on a decision that could unseat the Soviet leader

Russia's German dilemma

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When President Gorbachov and Chancellor Kohl meet in Moscow tomorrow, the key question on their agenda will be: "Can a united Germany belong to Nato?" The comments of Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet foreign minister, on Wednesday suggest that Moscow may be prepared to accept just that. If it does, there are some signs that Gorbachov may be about to get into deeper trouble than any even he has yet encountered.

Gorbachov prevailed this week over his rivals in the Communist Party leadership, but his victory may contain the seeds of his downfall. The end of the party's "leading role" is speeding the day when the office of General Secretary - the autocratic office through which Gorbachov effected such momentous transformations - will have become politically irrelevant. Gorbachov will have abdicated his institutional and ideological throne and will be answerable to the Russian people to them only because the Russians will be the only people, in what once was the Soviet Union, who will even be interested in his answers. And the Russian people are unlikely to be fond of a man whose *perestroika* failed, whose *glasnost* exploded, and who entertains German leaders in Moscow to help

Nato, are attracted to the idea of not belonging to it any longer. And it seems that the West German Social Democrats are seriously thinking of taking up that as a plank in their election platform. At an international security conference in Switzerland last weekend, the SPD delegates startled American participants - according to an American report - by affirming "that Nato had no role to play in a future Europe and a single Germany".

If the general hypothesis I have been putting forward on this page - that German nationalism is once more a major force - is correct, then the SPD is on to a winner. German nationalists, of their nature, dislike playing second fiddle in an international alliance dominated by the Americans, and also dislike the presence of any foreign troops, even allies, on their soil.

But how many German nationalists are there? Very few, several commentators suggest: all that belongs to the past. I disagree. I believe that, if the SPD plays the "out-of-Nato" card, there are enough German nationalists around to make Oskar Lafontaine - or whoever the Social Democrat candidate may be - next president of the Bundesrepublik, in place of the "internationalist" Helmut Kohl.

Bernard Levin on the miracle of an art that reached its greatest flowering during a world war

Le cinéma du paradis

I am sorry that *The Baker's Wife*, a musical directed by Trevor Nunn, has folded after a brief run at the Phoenix Theatre. I didn't get to see it, so I am in no position to say whether *vox populi* judged it correctly or not. But I must confess that when I say I didn't get to see it, it would be more accurate to say that I was reluctant to do so.

My lack of enthusiasm for a visit had nothing to do with the director, whom I hold in the very highest esteem, nor with the cast; and of the music and lyrics I naturally knew nothing. My problem was nostalgia, for I remember, and remember well, the film on which the show was based: Marcel Pagnol's *La Femme du Boulanger*. If you have handkerchiefs, prepare to wet them now.

Has there ever been a cinematic Golden Age to touch the years in France between, roughly 1930 and 1945? I am no cinema buff, but I should be very surprised to hear of a challenger. The names alone constitute a roll of artistic honour which anywhere else would have taken half a century to match, not just a dozen years. The directors: René Clair, Julien Duvivier, Marcel Pagnol, Jean Renoir, Jacques Feyder, Marcel Carné. The players: Arletty, Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, Michèle Morgan, Fernandel, Louis Jouvet, Françoise Rosay, Jean Gabin, Michel Simon, Pierre Brasseur, Jean-Louis Béraud. The films: *Un Carnet de Bal*, *Hotel du Nord*, *Drôle de Drame*, *Pépé le Moko*, *Quai des Brumes*, *Le Jour se*

Lève, Les Bas Fonds, *A Nous la Liberté*, *La Kermesse Héroïque*, the trilogy of *Marius*, *Fanny*, *César*, *La Grande Illusion*, *La Règle du Jeu*, *Les Enfants du Paradis*.

Hindsight tugs at the sleeve: after all, even I am not old enough to have seen the films as they came out. But in the years immediately after the war they were to be seen in cinemas such as the Hampstead Everyman, and I gradually collected them all. I suppose you can get the lot on video these days.

The Thirties in France were rotten, corrupt years, worse even than in Britain. Our politicians were creatures without vision, courage or even competence; theirs mostly were in the pay of anyone who would fork out, from Stavisky to Hitler. Our generals were useless boneheads; theirs were thirsting to destroy *la pauvre République*. Our fascists were led by rubbish like Oswald Mosley; theirs by one of their greatest writers. (Do you know what Maurras cried out when, at the end of his trial for treason in 1946, he was pronounced guilty? "C'est la revanche de Dreyfus!")

The arts can never get far away from their time; inevitably the French cinema mirrored French society and its quality. But the approach was from an oblique angle. There was nothing political in such films, though *La Règle du Jeu* did paint the French upper classes in acid (Renoir rightly guessed that they would be too stupid to realize how they were

being mocked), but there was a remarkable presence in much of their finest work. You cannot fail to hear the note of something coming to an end; in film after film, the fragility of the world around the makers is at the heart of the work, and the shadows are closing in. I do not believe it is a coincidence that so many of the love films end in tragedy, or at the least in loss.

It is as though they knew that the world was done for; the elegiac, autumnal melancholy that pervades many of these masterpieces says so clearly. If so, there was another irony to come; many of the actors and film-makers got out of France before the fall (of these, most went to Hollywood, but some stayed, and went on making films throughout the Occupation). Carné was finishing *Les Enfants du Paradis* even as the liberating armies rolled on towards Paris; I have heard said that half the Resistance were in the crowd scenes, impenetrably disguised as the poor of 1830 and ready to drop everything and fight as soon as the word came.

It came, but nothing since those years could match what had gone before. I saw a few films of the post-war French *nouvelle vague*; wretched, thin and lazy I thought them, and saw no more. And why should I, when I had such memories? There was a dire stage musical called *Fanny*, based on the Pagnol Marcelline trilogy, which I went to much later; it was at Drury Lane, and a stupendous flop. (One of the actors in it told

me that at a weekday matinée just before it closed there were only 60 people in the house. Imagine that vast shell holding only that tiny handful of grains of sand!)

Of all that wonderful galaxy, surely Arletty was the greatest star of all. Her beauty - not just of face and form, but voice as well - was like something out of a great Renaissance painting, instead of the manufactured,

empty artefacts of the Hollywood make-up rooms. I was dining once with Alan Moorehead; alone at a table on the other side of the restaurant there sat a beauty, no longer young. Alan said nothing, but went over and embraced her; the unheard dialogue ended in her shaking her head, gently, gracefully. Alan came back and said it was Arletty, whom he knew well, and the shake of the head was her reply



to his invitation to join us. (Mind you, once, on the stroke of the midnight that ushered in a New Year, I kissed Ingrid Bergman.)

I suppose that *La Règle du Jeu*, if there is to be a choice of one masterpiece among many, is the greatest of all those creations. My own personal love, though (and I think it is most people's), is *Les Enfants du Paradis*, for the richness of the unfolding story, the artistry with which all the plots and sub-plots are woven, the perfect casting, above all the passion and love and heart with which it is filled. If the pre-war films announced the end of the world, Carné's war-end epic says "I told you so".

A crazy attempt to film an English farce, *The Lunatic at Large*, which ended up as *Drôle de Drame*, is the only one of my list that was pure comedy, though *A Nous la Liberté* (my own runner-up) is very funny; *La Grande Illusion*, Renoir's great shout of pity for mankind's delight in war (the shout was soon stifled in his throat - the film came out in 1937) manages to avoid the obviousness and didacticism which have sunk many such attempts to indict war; the Pagnol trilogy will survive for ever not because of the love story but for the antics of the Marseillais who frequent Raimu's bar; *Le Jour se Lève* (Gabin at his best) is the one which has the most intense form of the twilight I have described. Ah, the alarm clock in the final seconds! (I am not spoiling it for you; long before you get to the end you will have been so gripped by the story that you will have forgotten all about alarm clocks. I invariably have.)

I am sorry I didn't see *The Baker's Wife*, and I wish Trevor a huge success in whatever he does next; it's the least I can do in return for the memories he has awakened in me today. Incidentally, who played the dwarf in *La Kermesse Héroïque*? And was he a dwarf?

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Why history will say Gorbachov was a fool

Robert Kilroy-Silk cannot admire a man who has unleashed the dogs of war

Mikhail Gorbachov has a lot to answer for. He may be the darling of the West, hailed as a great statesman, liberator of subject peoples, the man who kicked Eastern Europe on to the road to democracy, but that is not how he will be seen by history.

History is a more discerning and exacting taskmaster. It judges by results, rather than promises and slogans. It is not beguiled by an easily assumed style or a carefully cultured image. It does not look at Gorbachov through the eyes of an easily seduced Westerner, but stares with the cold, clear vision of a hungry Ukrainian miner.

It will pronounce Gorbachov to have been a decent but also a weak man, a misguided fool, an incompetent politician, a dreamer of impossible dreams. We can only hope that it will not go on to conclude that he was also responsible for more misery, destitution, destruction and death than Stalin and Hitler.

It is a real possibility. Anything is now possible in Eastern

Europe. Any fool could have foreseen that the consequences of the almost overnight removal of repressive regimes would mean serious disorder verging on anarchy and chaos. It would be surprising were it not so. Take the screwed-down top off a fizzy bottle and it explodes, over everyone.

The moment Gorbachov cavalierly announced that the East European countries could do their own thing, determine their own future, that the Soviet Union would not intervene, that the local Communist Party leaders would be left isolated and unprotected, then the only possible immediate outcome was major disorder.

You cannot, by force of Russian tanks, keep in office deeply unpopular communist governments in Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary for nearly half a century, and not expect an explosion when they are precipitately withdrawn.

Gorbachov had his reasons, of course, but they were not ones of great principle. He has not, overnight, become an Aristotelian, or even a convert to John Stuart Mill. He is still a good communist. It was the serious and developing economic problems of the Soviet Union, after 70 years of communism and five of *perestroika*, that forced his hand.

And the domestic economic difficulties are so profound and seemingly intractable that he has become careless of the consequences of some of his statements and actions. Either that, or he is naive and insensitive to a degree that it is impossible to believe.

What we do know is that he has abdicated from his wider responsibilities. He could not deal with the problems of the Soviet Union and its empire, so he threw in the towel, walked away, and in a spectacular fashion. Not even Pontius Pilate

washed his hands of his political problems and leadership obligations so dramatically. And, unlike Gorbachov, he was not hailed as a statesman for dodging his duties.

There is hardly a part of the former Soviet empire that is not in some kind of turmoil. East Germany has been deserted by its people and wobbles on the edge of bankruptcy and civil war. Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, all slightly more cohesive, with vestiges of democratic tradition, nevertheless face enormous economic and political problems they may never overcome. Poor Romania teeters on the precipice of a long, bloody civil war that will probably, almost certainly, culminate in the installation of a dictatorship - of the right or the left, it matters little - which may make the Ceausescu era look like a garden party.

Even the Soviet Union itself is beginning to break up. The

Baltic republics cock a snook at Moscow, the southern republics cannot become independent fast enough, and the Ukrainians are not alone in cautiously testing the strength of the Kremlin. Gorbachov may be fired in the West, but few of his subjects wish to remain under his leadership.

No wonder. Not only is there no food in shops, there is great uncertainty. Gorbachov governs on impulse. And, being a leader dictated to by impulse, he has allowed the mob to determine the political agenda. Almost everywhere in Eastern Europe the politics of the mob have replaced those of argument and persuasion.

It will get worse. Gorbachov might, as he said at the Central Committee meeting this week, have a vision of government by "humane, democratic socialism", but almost all his recent actions have worked against its implementation.

It might have been possible, had he also had a vision of how to proceed. There might have been a chance of an orderly progress to multi-party systems and democracy throughout Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union, had he established law and order first, as urged by Vladimir Brovnikov, the Soviet ambassador to Poland.

A sensible and adroit politician would have prepared the ground before sowing the volatile and irrepressible seeds of democracy. He would have sought allies, set clear objectives, followed a strategy. He had the political and military power to do all this. He could have enforced gradual reforms that would have stuck.

Instead, Gorbachov has let loose the dogs of war, as we shall see in the next few months and years in Eastern Europe. We shall all be involved. We shall not then vote him the most popular leader in Europe. He will be the man who put us all, unnecessarily, in great jeopardy.

Fauna men are hard as butter



ALAN COREN

among the rhododendrons and shot the breeze.

She and I arrived at the tooth in question by reaching through one of the apertures offered by the Feely Box. The Feely Box is in the new Activity Centre of the Natural History Museum, and it was particularly fitting that the Princess should be there to open it just as her husband, across at Kew, had finished baring the earth's despoilers for the destruction of the rainforests. For, increasingly, the mission of both institutions is to concern themselves with the conservation of what is, in order to avoid becoming the repositories of what was, and it was pleasing to find future monarchs

severally addressing themselves simultaneously to the flora and fauna they hope nationally to inherit.

Inheritance, in fact, is now the theme of the NHM, embodied in a resonant quotation which hangs on its wall to remind us that "we do not inherit the earth from our parents, we borrow it from our children"; and it was therefore particularly reassuring not only to find the NHM teeming with my tiny creditors, but to find them interacting so enthusiastically with the exhibits which the new, enlightened NHM policy encourages them to touch about with *Please Touch!* is the campaign anthem, which only goes to

show that a lifetime spent in considering what made a dinosaur tick does not necessarily disqualify a person from understanding the nature of somewhat younger organisms.

Please stick head in scorpion's pincers! was how Brendan interpreted the rubric. I found Brendan in the Creeping Crawly Gallery, a spot I had previously visited only in nightmares. The scorpion was 10ft long. Confronted with a similar item in the Oodons of my own youth, a man called Chuck would have cried, "Stand back, Professor, there's only one language these things understand" and emptied his carbine to no effect whatever, but we have come a long way since then.

"It holds you like this," explained Brendan. He closed the scorpion's claw over his head. "Then it brings its tail over and stings you. Then it drags you up there to its jaws, and chews you to little bits."

"Did you know," said Brendan, who had come out of the scorpion, "that half of all the species in the world are beetles?"

"I've got a stag-beetle at home," said another boy. "It's that long."

"I've stroked a tarantula," said the first girl. "At Syon Park. They let you. This man had it walking up his arm, and I stroked it!" Astonishing. My credo has ever been, if it's too big to step on, run away. What's happened to kids? Where are their phobias? Shamed, I went back to the Feely Box, just to show was a brave little soldier, and when I stuck my hand in, it touched something unsavoury. I drew it out again, quickly.

"Brackets fungus," explained the attendant. "Also known as Jew's Ear. But we've stopped calling it that, of course."

Quite. All part of the learning process.



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THE GENSCHER OPTION

As the fusion of the two Germanies accelerates, so the language of statesmen alters as they try to keep pace with new realities. There is much talk now of "transition".

The word means different things to different people. The differences depend on whether the speaker gives the highest priority to international arrangements which accompany reunification or to reunification itself. To the Foreign Secretary in Bonn this week, it should be a "reasonable" period for necessary adjustments to be made. Yesterday the Prime Minister did not measure a reasonable period in time, but did not disclaim her earlier suggestions that it should be measured in years. To others, and particularly to German politicians, transitional arrangements should be used while more permanent ways of ensuring stability in Europe are worked out.

Military alignments and alliances are the key transitional arrangement. While the headlong rush of events and elections may dissolve the civilian border between East and West Germany, that line also divides two armed alliances. A moment is rapidly approaching when the desire in East Germany for reunification will collide with the 380,000 Soviet soldiers who live there. The key problem for Western policymakers is to avoid that collision while managing a Soviet withdrawal from East Germany.

Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher has made a constructive opening bid. He has suggested that, as an interim arrangement, the present territory of East Germany should be demilitarized. A reunified Germany would remain a member of Nato. Not the least of this proposal's merits is that it has been sufficiently well-judged to engage the serious interest of both the US Secretary of State and his Soviet counterpart.

The idea has not been explored in great detail and it has drawbacks. In the current climate, the idea of leaving Nato forces in West Germany might be politically unpopular and

difficult to sustain. It requires a Soviet leadership ready to face down accusations from its internal opposition that it has "surrendered" to the West without good cause. The merit of such arrangements lies less in the quality of the concept than in the detail of enforceability and verification; we have no idea whether the various parties think they can agree on the fine print.

Herr Genscher's plan has two strengths. It is a strong position from which Nato can bargain with the Soviet Union, which is unlikely to accept such an idea immediately. There will probably be an attempt to negotiate parallel reductions in Warsaw Pact and Nato forces on either side of the inner German border. There may be an attempt to negotiate a reduction in the Soviet troop presence which falls short of complete invisibility. But time, the flow of people out of East Germany and the date of the elections there are not on the Soviet side.

The second advantage lies in the thinking which transitional arrangements must stimulate in Nato. Whatever its geographical deployment, the kind of defence which Nato provides will change. At the moment, its forces on the central front are geared to resisting a theoretical attack which could be mounted by tanks stationed only a few miles away. Shrinking Soviet forces in East Germany mean that the type of defence needed will change.

With the possibility of a demilitarized East Germany under serious discussion in Moscow, Washington and Bonn, there is no reason for defence ministries and Nato's thinkers to remain silent on the ways in which they might react to this change. The idea, already put round, that strategic thinking in Western capitals has been deep frozen by the Cold War has incalculable political consequences — not least in West Germany. Advocates of neutrality for a reunified Germany are to be heard and they would gain strength from being able to represent Nato as a dinosaur incapable of adapting.

POLAND'S 'BIG BANG'

The Polish Prime Minister, Mr Tadeusz Mazowiecki, arrives in London on Monday, just before the Paris Club meets to discuss ways of lightening Poland's \$30 billion burden of debt to foreign governments, to seek Mrs Thatcher's support for Poland's "big bang" transition to the free market. He deserves the most sympathetic of hearings.

The strategy of economic and social restructuring launched on January 1 has no precedent for speed or boldness, even outside the communist world. The goal Poland's remarkable Finance Minister, Mr Leszek Balcerowicz, has set himself is to dismantle the command economy within months, seizing the moment of greatest popular commitment to the new Government to inflict the worst pain.

To create the basis of sound money and low inflation without which his planned wholesale privatization of enterprises and distribution systems cannot proceed, he has imposed a shock therapy of "corrective inflation", under which prices are intended first to soar and then, as they reach the demand barrier in a free market, to steady.

Last month, in a completely successful operation, the Polish zloty was made convertible with the dollar overnight. Subsidies on food, energy and raw materials — which last year accounted for nearly a third of state spending — were slashed or abolished, tight fiscal and monetary policies were introduced and wages were pegged at well below the rate of inflation. The official statistics for January reveal the severity of the treatment.

Inflation, 900 per cent last year, soared to over 65 per cent a month, although this month, for the first time, prices began to respond to market conditions and some fell. Wages, by contrast, rose by only 1.3 per cent. Domestic production fell by a fifth in comparison with the previous January, and both exports and imports showed sharp falls. In any other country, such figures would signal disaster; in Poland, it means the experiment is roughly on

course. The preplanned slump is intended to reduce inflation to 4-5 per cent (a month) by June, and to a manageable 2-3 per cent for the rest of the year.

The Government openly acknowledges that it is gambling on speedy results in the macro-economic sphere — and risking social as well as economic chaos if it fails. But it argues that the distortions in Poland's economy are so great that it had no choice but to throw the people into the water and tell them to swim.

The astonishing fact is that most ordinary Poles, whose already low incomes are expected to fall by a fifth before recovery sets in, are taking the medicine quietly, even proudly. They have made the connection between freedom and the free market.

The next steps will be even more difficult. Poland's huge vertically integrated monopolies govern every aspect of distribution and production: before privatization, they must be broken up to encourage competition. The Government plans to create a "factories hospital" to put the better companies on their feet, and to court foreign investment in agro-industry to get food into the shops at affordable prices. The Government will tread a knife-edge as it turns to the supply side: it must create incentives for production, and for consumers, without courting a return to hyper-inflation.

The approval on Tuesday of the IMF's \$700 million stabilization loan, promptly followed by \$360 million from the World Bank will give Mr Balcerowicz a breathing space. Next week in Paris, Poland will ask Western governments not only to reschedule, but to write down, its existing debts. They will be reluctant to set a precedent which Latin American debtors would immediately invoke. The question is, however, whether they can afford, in the interest of stability in Eastern Europe, to refuse. Poland is doing what no country has tried to do: the West should acknowledge its courage by casting bread on the uncharted waters it is crossing.

A PRINCELY ROLE

The visionary project devised and promoted by the Prince of Wales for a "community army" of youth is gradually assuming more shape. The outline of the scheme was published yesterday in a consultative document produced jointly by the Prince's Trust and the Commission on Citizenship, which was launched by the Speaker of the Commons, Mr Bernard Weatherill, in 1988.

A great deal of thought has clearly been given to avoiding both the obvious and the hidden pitfalls. The idea of encouraging young people to devote a few months of their lives to the community but unpaid service to the community can hardly in itself cause controversy, unless British society has turned its back on virtually all its most important values and beliefs. But its translation into reality, for it inevitably runs on some sensitive toes.

What is proposed is much more than a scheme for getting idle and unemployed youth off the streets. It is primarily concerned with the moulding of personality and character. Prince Charles' conviction is that young people of all classes and backgrounds need significant challenges if they are to mature to self-reliance. He believes they need the moral growth and the sense of belonging that comes from the experience of service to others. There is a dimension of individual self-improvement, therefore, but also of involvement in the improvement of society.

The realms of the individual and the social are sometimes treated as opposites. There are sometimes tension or balance between them is a theme current in much political debate — the former associated with the right, the latter with the left. Neither the heir to the throne nor Mr Speaker can afford to be connected too obviously with either side of the divide; but they share the advantage that they start from

neutral ground, and can call on both sides for assistance and support. And as long as these two dimensions receive equal emphasis, they can rightly expect to receive that support, though those of one persuasion might be expected to emphasize the individual dimension and those of the other the social.

Mr David Blunkett, MP for Sheffield Brightside and a member of Labour's national executive, has described the Prince's project as built on principles of service to the community that go back to the origins of the Labour movement. Government ministers, on the other hand, see a continuity between what the Prince is trying to achieve and the values of the enterprise culture. In truth, these are not opposites — it is only the necessary dialectic of the British party political debate that makes them seem so. The objectives of youth community service are neither those of the Young Conservatives nor of the Young Socialists, but something transcending both.

The Prince's philosophy of the "whole man", which is implied in his approach to youth community service, supposes that the ideal is a balance and that the balance is attainable. It is a noble goal. There would, of course, be risks to him if it went wrong, most of all if it were seen as leaning too far on either side of the balance.

Yesterday's outline suggests that this has not happened so far, and that the Prince and his advisers are sufficiently politically alert to steer a confident course that will continue to attract all-party support and keep clear of damaging labels. He is not engaged in the moral formation of "Thatcher's children" or indeed of "Kinnock's children" — that would be an improper role for the heir to the throne to concern himself with — but of good citizens who are also good people. That is an entirely proper role for a prince.

Heavier calls on NHS resources

From Dr Oscar Hill

Sir, There has been a massive change in the Government's position on NHS reforms that has not received the attention it deserves. From April, 1991, all elements of the NHS must be financed by negotiated contracts. London teaching district treats patients from something like 40 districts and an indeterminate number of budget-holding GPs. Being centrally placed, they receive and admit commuters as casualties and those who find it convenient to attend near their place of work.

The major hospitals can offer specialist services not available locally and the standard of care in a teaching hospital may be higher than in some local hospitals, thus attracting patients. The hospital managers are ill-prepared for the complex task of negotiating contracts with equally unprepared districts.

Because of these difficulties, financial stringency, and the historic links within a district between the purchaser and provider of services it will be tempting to require everyone to be looked after in their own district. They could well require casualties seen elsewhere to be transferred to a local facility as soon as possible, as is the current practice with psychiatric emergencies. There is some merit in this approach, but there are extensive ramifications that require debate.

Not only will this policy severely limit patient choice, but there will be a drastic fall in the clinical activity and revenue of the major teaching hospitals, damaging their service, teaching, and research.

Of the different aspects of trust status — local recognition of terms and conditions of employment, commercial management of capital assets, and financial dependence on contracts for patient care — the third is the most radical, with the most immediate impact. The entire NHS has been told that it can expect to take the major step towards trust status by April, 1991, entirely contrary to the Government's earlier position that trust status would be awarded only to units with sound management systems.

I can understand and share the Government's impatience with the inefficiencies of the NHS, but if the Government in frustration makes unrealistic demands of the poor old NHS horse it will not get better, but is more likely to collapse between the shafts.

Yours faithfully,
OSCAR HILL,
10 Harley Street, W1.

'The Satanic Verses'

From Mr Herb Greer

Sir, The statement from the families of British hostages (report, February 6) is wrong. *The Satanic Verses* did not cause "serious damage to community relations in Britain and deaths around the world". Books are passive objects. Those difficulties and horrors were caused by the chosen actions of vindictive and bigoted human beings.

It is depressing to see people who have suffered directly from such bigotry and malice join the ranks of certain well-meaning public figures, and truckle to those who have caused their suffering.

If our century has taught us anything, it is the grim lesson that such appeasement does not propitiate the bigoted and malicious; on the contrary, grovelling inspires them to inflict still more hideous ordeals on the rest of us who have not suffered — yet. Is that really what the families of the hostages want?

Yours,
HERB GREER,
124 Fog Lane,
Didsbury, Manchester 20.

Competitive posts

From Mr Peter Kane

Sir, Alan Tiffin of the Union of Communication Workers (February 3) states that if the Post Office letter monopoly is removed, the universal tariff will disappear. I do not accept that this will happen.

In a competitive market place, the users of mail services will not wish to have the complication of dealing with a supplier who offers different rates for various parts of the country. The customer will demand, and get, a single rate for the whole country.

The Post Office should be able, because of its established branch network and sorting centres, to compete with any private operator. If the playing field is not level it surely lies in favour of the Post Office.

Yours faithfully,
PETER KANE (Chairman),
Business Post Ltd,
Express House, Crystal Way,
Harrow, Middlesex.
February 5.

Unlikely skill

From Mrs Fiona Jack

Sir, Yesterday, while walking in the beautiful lake forest above the sophisticated mountain resort, I heard the sound of bagpipes. Being a Scot I had to investigate. I met, in a clearing, a delightful Dutch girl who said it was the perfect place to practise. In what other unusual places have your readers heard the pipes being practised, and by whom?

Yours faithfully,
FIONA M. JACK,
Chalet Sous-Bois,
3963 Crans Montana,
Switzerland.
February 2.

New beginnings in Eastern Europe

From Dr W. H. Zawadzki

Sir, How many Germans would endorse Mr Modrow's call (report, February 2) to make Berlin the capital of a reunited federal Germany? Is there not a strong case against Berlin, the symbol of former Prussian domination of Germany and a city situated since 1945 on the eastern periphery of the country?

Should the Germans not be encouraged to look further back into their past, beyond the Bismarckian era, to the long history of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation and opt for one of the cities where the Imperial Diet used to meet? What about Frankfurt-on-Main, which also hosted the liberal Parliament of 1848-49 and is today the financial centre of Western Germany with excellent air facilities.

Greater Berlin could become a separate Land (like Hamburg) or perhaps the chief city of a Land based on historic Brandenburg.

Yours faithfully,
W. H. ZAWADZKI,
Abingdon School,
Park Road,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire.
February 2.

From Dr David Le Vay

Sir, The recent changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have left military establishments on both sides of the old Iron Curtain uncertain as to their future role, as exemplified by the present correspondence in your columns (February 7) about new patterns of activity for our own Army.

The old pattern of the West confronted by an evil Soviet empire was curiously stabilizing: each side knew its part and the dangers of an actual conflict were such as to exclude its materializing.

Now, everything is changing and very volatile, and therefore dangerous. The resurgence of nationalism means that local conflicts may trigger enormous consequences, as in 1914.

One way of resolving these anxieties, by doing something that is in any case inevitable, is by the establishment of a world police — of a Pax Nordica, imposed by the USA, Europe, Russia, and, yes, China. This would make allies of old enemies and achieve, at a stroke, what the UN has never been able to do. It would maintain the self-respect of national armed forces uneasily seeking a new role.

The time has long gone when representatives of unimportant or ideologically-motivated countries should be allowed to block efforts

active police action by the UN. This organization's duty would be to supply a civilian administration once pacification had been achieved.

Another advantage of this scheme is that the military contribution of each policing power need be much less than has been required in a confrontational situation and the resources so freed would go to improve internal economic conditions, particularly in the Soviet Union but also, usefully, nearer home.

The idea is already in the air, for we are thinking of using armies in disasters and war is the greatest of these. Instead of sending Finns and Irishmen and Fijians to smother the ashes of exhausted conflicts, let us so organize matters that Americans, Russians, Europeans and Chinese join in a quadripartite peace-keeping force of such power that wars, including internal wars, cannot even begin. The difficulties are obvious, and great, the potential benefits far greater.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LE VAY,
6 Garstons, High Street,
Burwash, East Sussex.
February 7.

From Dr P. Hackett and Mr M. J. Jones

Sir, We should like to suggest that one very practical form of assistance to East European countries would be the provision of free education, both in scientific-technical disciplines and the humanities, at United Kingdom higher education institutions. The approximate cost of funding undergraduate study for, say, 1,000 young men and women, drawn from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland and Romania, would be of the order of £10 million per annum.

The expenditure of this admittedly not insignificant amount of money would be welcomed and appreciated by the individuals of the governments of the countries concerned. Regardless of any direct financial advantages that might accrue to the United Kingdom over time, we should hope that these unpaid future graduate ambassadors would exercise a long-term beneficial influence on behalf of this country.

Yours faithfully,
PETER HACKETT (President),
M. J. JONES (Secretary),
The Institution of Mining and Metallurgy,
44 Portland Place, W1.
February 1.

Press Council plight

From Mr Peter Thompson

Sir, The letter from Mr Louis Blom-Cooper, Chairman of the Press Council, jointly with Kenneth Morgan, Director of the same body (February 6), raises a number of points not only on the question of financing the Press Council but also on the growth of its activities, particularly if one has in mind that, in 1989, the Press Council received a record of 1,484 complaints.

With the introduction of the code of practice agreed by almost all the national newspapers last December, with their "ombudsman" type of system to represent readers' interests, it is clear that the Press Council will, ideally, have a lesser part to play as the national press will be conducting their own investigations.

If regional dailies, regional

weeklies, periodicals and other newspaper groups were to introduce their own type of code of practice based on that of the national press, then perhaps the funding difficulties of the Press Council might be overcome by having less work to do.

The readers' interests would be greatly enhanced, too, as their complaints would be dealt with more expeditiously, while at the same time not forfeiting their legal rights that happens when making a complaint to the Press Council.

Sadly, the behaviour of the newspaper and periodical industry, in editorial terms, has deteriorated and this deterioration has flooded the Press Council with many more complaints.

Yours etc.,
PETER THOMPSON,
60 Beltran Road, SW6,
February 6.

'Mad cow' disease

From Mr Bruce V. Jones

Sir, The report (February 2) on research developments with BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) emphasises that we do not know what the risk to man is; nor, in fact, do we understand much about the causal agent.

By coincidence you also printed in the "On This Day" column a letter from 1866 referring to the cattle plague (rinderpest) epidemic then ravaging the UK. The author demonstrated the sound economics of a prompt and decisive slaughter policy to stamp out the disease, as advocated by the great veterinary epidemiologist Professor Gamgee and Simonds. Their arguments are just as potent today.

With more than 9,500 cattle

already slaughtered and farmers desperate to see the disease brought under control, why does not the minister review his compensation policy? Cattle owners are being penalised by the injustice of payment of only 50 per cent of the beast's value; such penny-pinching will blunt the incentive to report every suspect case and some may evade what should be a fool-proof net.

Fair compensation and vigorous implementation have always been the watchwords of a successful disease-eradication policy.

Yours faithfully,
BRUCE V. JONES,
Down Ampney House,
Down Ampney,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire.
February 5.

Power and prices

From the Chairman of the Association of Independent Electricity Producers

Sir, Anxious to keep to a privatisation timetable which the electricity boards have the power to upset, the Government has lost its commitment to competition between generators — the very competition which it promised would bring "downward pressure on prices".

The privatisation has always been loaded against new entrants, not least to ensure that the electricity boards are attractive to investors when they are floated. One serious deterrent to prospective independents is excess generating capacity already in the system.

Despite this over-capacity, the Government has just granted the CEBG planning and investment approval for a new power station at Killingholme, Humberside. In contrast, most genuinely independent schemes still cannot get off the ground. The companies which will succeed the CEBG are still trying to agree the price at which they will sell their privatised power. As the incumbent generators command most of the market, independents are finding

almost impossible to obtain the long-term contracts for their power necessary to secure financial backing for their projects.

Area electricity boards, which as price takers buy most of their power from generating companies, are largely unwilling to offer contracts to independents until they have settled a price with their main suppliers — the ex-CEBG companies. The longer that this is allowed to persist, the less chance there will be for real independents to have any impact on the electricity market.

If it really wants to encourage competition from clean, efficient independent power generation, the Government still has much to do. It should begin by curbing the building plans of the CEBG until independents have their promised "level playing field".

Yours faithfully,
D. C. PIKE, Chairman,
Association of Independent Electricity Producers,
South West One Ltd.,
Herodsfoot,
Liskeard, Cornwall.
February 5.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (01)782 5046.

Making amends for misdeeds

From Mr R. H. Little

Sir, By happy coincidence, on Tuesday, as MPs were calling for offenders to be put to tough and useful work in the community during the debate on the Criminal Justice White Paper (report, February 7) a photograph appeared in our local evening paper of two offenders cleaning a car of a disabled person.

They were taking part in the scheme this unit has just started in which offenders, mainly convicted of taking cars or stealing from them, wash cars for members of the public whose cars are especially precious. Offenders report before 9 a.m. on a Sunday and wash cars solidly through until about 3 p.m., with a short break for lunch.

In that time we wash some 20 cars inside and out to showroom standards. Equally important is the care and attention given by the offenders to the drivers, who are given a chair in the warm, a cup of coffee, and are generally made to feel welcome.

Not surprisingly, we are looking for ways to double the number of sessions because all our customers come back next time.

Six hours' car-washing is hard work by anyone's standards, especially in a gale such as blew last weekend. I also have photographs of offenders up to their thighs in mud and water, clearing a sluice in a local country park, or heaving sandbags to make a Cornish wall for a local ecology-minded school.

I could cite other examples, not only from Berkshire but from all over the country, in which offenders are making amends for offending by work which not only demands physical and mental effort but which is constructive and from which the public benefit — and all free.

May I leave the last word to an elderly lady from Newbury, whose home our offenders redecorated recently. "I must admit the ones who came here were most helpful and very kind-hearted", she said. One even fitted window locks for her because she feared she might be burgled.

Some hooligans.
Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND H. LITTLE
(Senior Probation Officer and Community Service Officer),
Berkshire Probation Service,
18a Castle Street,
Reading, Berkshire.
February 7.

Museum charges

From the Director of the National Maritime Museum

Sir, Professor Todd (February 5) displays the arrogance he so deplores in accusing museum directors of claiming to know what the public wants when they have never asked.

At the National Maritime Museum we have a comprehensive programme of market research, both among visitors and those who have never visited, and we are very clear about what they want. I know that many other museums do the same.

As Dr Wright (February 7) points out, the current debate on charges is clouded by the fact that museums have two interrelated roles: one to foster serious scholarship and research and the other to make their collections available and comprehensible to the general public. Charging helps attain both these goals and carefully thought-out concession schemes will enable poorer people (if this really is the worry among those who still do not charge for entry) to continue to benefit.

Fine words like "inalienable" and "national resource" used by the advocates of free admission all too often conceal a fear of being responsible for the well-managed and efficient organisation that a more businesslike orientation inevitably brings.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD ORMOND, Director,
National Maritime Museum,
Greenwich, SE10.

Charitable example

From the Reverend Michael J. Burns

Sir, How refreshing to read (February 6) that a 15-year-old boy's Portfolio win will go to charity — after giving his friends a celebratory lunch. This should encourage those who tend to denigrate the youth of today and be an example to many adult winners who so often boast of spending their winnings on themselves.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL J. BURNS,
St Mark's Vicarage,
St Mark's Road,
Tottenham Corner,
Epsom, Surrey.
February 6.

Mind over matter

From Mr Paul Watkins

Sir, Spending a night in a hotel in the company of a rather pompous client, my brother, who was a "10-minute man", completed *The Times* crossword in his room over the morning tea without writing in the answers. Carefully refolding the paper to restore its virgin appearance, he then went down to breakfast and scribbled in the answers in just less than a minute under the awestruck eyes of his client.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL WATKINS,
Sotherton,
Halesworth, Suffolk.
February 6.

SOME REVIEWS MAY BE REPRINTED FROM YESTERDAY'S LATER EDITIONS

THE ARTS

Surfeit of porridge

TELEVISION

Sheridan Morley

Fans of the Australian soap opera *Prisoner Cell Block H*, arguably the worst thing to have happened in Sydney since the arrival of the first British convicts, will have been fascinated by two examinations transmitted last night of the realities of modern prison life. BBC 2's *40 Minutes on "The Danger Men"* looked at an experimental wing in Hurlingham where convicted murderers and other high-risk offenders are given a new softy-softy treatment in the hope of making them better citizens, or at any rate better prisoners. The scheme costs £1 million, at a time of severe prison economies elsewhere, and is likely to fill correspondence columns with outrage. There was even a *Monty Python*-esque quality about the whole affair as prisoners sat around in luxury discussing previous incarcerations, much as returning holidaymakers analyze different resorts.

Surprisingly, one of the guinea-pig prisoners escaped with the help of a visiting teacher during the making of the film, while another memorably noted that when stabbing a man 30 times and generally jumping on him, he was both very annoyed and 18 stone.

The programme was hugely successful of the project. For anger about the current prison system one had to turn to *This Week* (TV), where Richard Linstead had some chilling interviews with inmates of secure mental hospitals who have been found "unfit to plead" and are therefore in effect sentenced for life to their own insanity.

But prisoners locked away "without limits of time" because they are mentally unstable may also only be murderers within their own imaginations: as long as they are kept away from the courts, not only are they unable to have their cases heard, but the killers who performed the murders are no longer being sought by the police either.

John Russell Taylor on the overdue re-assessment of an English 18th-century master painter, Wright of Derby

Back into the light at last

When a major exhibition turns up in London with the imposing credentials of being organized jointly by the Tate Gallery, the French Musée National (for the Grand Palais in Paris) and the Metropolitan in New York, one hardly expects to find that the subject is an English artist. Much less that it is not Gainsborough, Reynolds, Constable or Turner, which seems to be about as far as the taste for *le style anglais* extends on the other side of the Channel.

Nevertheless, the Wright of Derby show (Tate, until April 22) comes to us with precisely these qualifications. More remarkable still, it comprises upwards of 170 original works and nearly 50 reproductive prints, and is devoted to an artist of whom even many British art-lovers have hardly heard.

Identifying features? Well, Wright's most familiar pictures all make virtuoso play with light from a source concealed somewhere within the picture. Even those who do not know the title or the painter would probably be familiar, at least in reproduction, with the National Gallery's "An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump" or Derby Art Gallery's "A Philosopher giving that Lecture on the Orrery, in which a lamp is put in place of the Sun".

They date from, respectively, 1768 and 1766, and since they both feature and demonstrate some kind of scientific experiment, they tend to figure prominently in books and documentaries about the Age of Enlightenment, and probably the Romanticism of the Industrial Revolution as well. In the show this latter connection is underlined by the number of semi-industrial scenes which Wright painted, they range from interiors of an iron forge, a blacksmith's shop and a glass factory to a distant prospect with the title "Ark-



"A Philosopher giving that Lecture on the Orrery, in which a lamp is put in place of the Sun", now at the Tate

wright's Cotton Mills by Night".

But it is not only historic and documentary interest which has made these paintings famous. It is their cunning and intricate composition, which neatly manages to combine educational interest with straightforward human detail, such as the frightened little girl who has to be persuaded that the bird in the air pump is coming to no harm. In this respect Wright clearly anticipates the popular genre pieces of the 19th century, and so remained popular long after many of his contemporaries had come to look merely faded and old-fashioned.

In addition, there is the technical/anecdotal interest (akin to "See how the eyes follow you round the room") in his handling of light. The two best-sellers have in common with many of his

lesser works a dramatic contrast of light and dark: the light emanating from some concealed source, a candle or a lamp, somewhere in the centre of the pictorial space, and radiating out until it is lost in the shadowy surroundings in such a way that the features of the figures around it are modelled by a strong chiaroscuro, almost theatrical in effect.

The smaller, simpler pictures in the same line, like "Two Boys Fighting over a Bladder" or "Two Girls Dressing a Kitten", are full of drama, and the skill of their painting is so self-evident that even people who know very little about the technique of art are impressed.

Of course, these dramatic light-and-shade pieces were not all that Joseph Wright accomplished in a prolific career spanning nearly

half a century. He began as a portrait painter of the local Midlands gentry, and continued to paint portraits throughout his life.

It is not always easy to make up one's mind how one feels about the portraits: with hindsight it is impossible not to notice that Wright's mastery of soft-focus effects might be the envy of many a classic Hollywood photographer; and there is, undeniably, a strong hint of sentimentalism in the way his sitters' faces are deprived of hard outline and frequently fade hazily into the scenery around the edges.

On the other hand, Wright would probably not have rejected the charge, or even thought that it was a charge. He clearly prided himself on being a man of feeling. Sentiment, in a rather fulsome and funereal 18th-century shape, is

prominent in many of his more fanciful later pictures, such as those inspired by the doleful heroines of Sterne.

There are, it is true, some acute portraits of older women, and some of younger men which make you wonder whether Wright meant to present them in quite such an unappealing light. But for a modern audience the most attractive of his works, apart from the chiaroscuro set-pieces, are likely to be the landscapes. As might be expected, given his preoccupation with the drama of light, the sights that he found most striking and productive on his extended trip to Italy 1773-75, were the fireworks of Rome and the eruptions of Vesuvius.

The first he saw, the second he had to imagine, since unfortunately the volcano did not see fit to put on a show while he was there. But he painted both frequently, and with such success that his grandest paintings of that subject were bought by Catherine the Great, and are seen at the Tate courtesy of loans from the Hermitage and the Pushkin Museum.

Even better are some of the quieter Italian landscapes, real or imaginary, with or without banditti. In particular there is an amazing picture of 1790 (like many artists of the period, he went on and on working over his sketches and his memories), described simply as "An Italian Landscape", where the folds of the mountain across the water are rendered so economically in alternating bands of lavender and grey-green that we could imagine we were looking at something by one of Gauguin's disciples, or, less grandly, one of the pre-war dust-jackets to classic Baisford books.

Wright emerges — in the league-table of comparable painters recently memorialized by the Tate — as a little below Stubbs in interest, and decidedly above Agass. And it is comforting that his best-known paintings turn out actually to be his best as well.

A soloist saves the occasion

CONCERT

Paul Griffiths

CBSO/Salonon Birmingham Town Hall

It was worth doing without a certain weight in Brahms's Violin Concerto to hear the piece played so beautifully in tune: Cho-Liang Lin seemed to enjoy exploring the highest register with perfect clarity. He also enjoyed observing small points of articulation, sailing on long phrases or executing double stops without any effort, and bringing a delicacy to the rhythm. The gypsy associations of the finale, for instance, were forgotten in favour of a smiling, skittish playfulness.

But the accompaniment was being achieved with much less polish. The wind players of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, normally a characterful bunch, sounded unbelievably dull and uncertain in the introduction to the slow movement, and there was altogether a lack of rhythmic firmness, for which the conductor, Esa-Pekka Salonen, substituted a rather implausible bellicosity of sound and gesture.

Worse was to come in the second half, in a lumbering, fragmentary and sometimes incomprehensible performance of Schoenberg's *Pelleas and Melisande*. There was little harmonic driving force to carry the music from section to section (or occasionally even from bar to bar), and the immensely complex textures, which need such careful balancing, often seemed to be happening by accident, so that one heard one or two salient details surrounded by a sludge.

Instead of seeming an extraordinary feat of musical development, therefore, the work came over as grossly repetitive, and one can only hope for some improvement before the repeat performance at the Barbican this evening.

Leading lady finds her range

It is a fair bet that the Coliseum will be putting out the HOUSE FULL notices during the run of this revival of *La traviata*. And the reason is the presence of Helen Field in the title role.

When David Pountney's chilly, didactic and often perverse staging of Verdi was first seen 18 months ago, Field was fighting her way towards a portrait of Violetta. She has now found it. There is the febrile child-woman of Act I, snatching at each passing pleasure from Stefano Lazaridis's now notorious chaise-longue resting in an improbable field of corn. (In such surroundings, Pountney suggests, Paris's top-baited bourgeoisie dream of getting their cars.)

But Helen Field's real triumph comes in Violetta's two great

OPEN

John Higgins

La traviata Coliseum

confrontations. The first is with Germont Père (Alan Opie back in full, solemn voice, looking as though he had stepped straight from a Finero play) when the first concession is made to bourgeois rectitude. "Dieu alla giovine" was given the full power of a sacrifice made under great pressure.

The second is, of course, with death itself, where the Field soprano, now gaining weight and security by the year, is heard to

greatest effect. The cry for help in "Gran Dio" raises this *Traviata* on to its right emotional plane.

It is a pity the new Alfredo, Edmund Barham, could not touch such heights. It is solidly sung in a conventional way. But too many of the notes are directed not into the house but to the boards of the raised stage platform, which Lazaridis has draped in red and gold cloth wickedly reminiscent of the interior of Covent Garden.

Martin Handley is the new conductor, cautious and even anonymous to begin with, but encouraging the singers to deliver in long-panned phrases. In the last act he gave Helen Field strong support, and she is the lady who is delivering a very complete and satisfying Violetta.



Helen Field: triumph as Violetta

Conflict of honesty made flesh

For Arthur Miller, the key moment in modern American history was not Vietnam, not even World War Two, but the crash of 1929 and the ensuing depression. Those events triggered the trappings and trimmings from the nation and showed the heart within. They revealed to everyone what she or he morally was.

Miller has acknowledged all this in his non-dramatic writings, most recently his autobiography *Timebends*, and in several plays, most explicitly *The American Clock*. The same recognition illumines *The Price*, the latest of his works to be revived at the Young Vic and far from the least. Indeed, David Thacker's sensitive yet robust production may well establish it, at any rate in British eyes, among his masterpieces.

As you enter the theatre, you are forcefully made aware of the forum in which the dramatic conflicts are largely to be fought. There are piles of ancient tables, chairs and bric-a-brac, cumulatively representing the past, or the Past. This is where old man Franz, ruined in 1929, frittered away the next 30 years. Now he is dead, and everything is to be sold to a wily old assassin. What is its value, what its price?

Those are also the questions faced by the protagonists, Franz's sons. Vic left college, became a cop, looked after his father. The price of that choice was money and career; the value, moral peace. Walter upped and became a doctor. The value was wealth and success; the price, unease and unhappiness, a broken marriage and a bad conscience.

Since Miller has the pathological skills of his teacher Ibsen, all this makes for a fascinatingly intricate post-mortem examination. However, it is Walter's belated attempt to resuscitate the brothers' long-dead relationship that provides most of the drama, particularly as there are guilty secrets to be revealed. And certainly Thacker succeeds in bringing Miller's master-theme, the

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

The Price Young Vic

degree of our responsibility to ourselves and each other, more subtly to life than I recall when *The Price* was originally produced here, 20 years ago.

He knows what it is like to see a sibling after a long estrangement: the shy watchfulness, the well-meant but ill-judged gesture, the hidden rancour, the irrepressible anger. He understands the emotional contours of a marriage as husband and wife shift from weariness to warmth to hostility and back again, all for reasons incomprehensible to the outsider. He senses just when and how heat gets intolerably intense, and simmer becomes boil.

But then he has expert performers in Bob Peck, David Calder and Marjorie Yates, playing Walter, Vic and Vic's exasperated wife.



Alan MacNaughtan (left) and Bob Peck in Arthur Miller's *The Price*

Comic confusion at the seaside

Jeremy Kingston

The Comedy of Errors Theatre Royal, Bath

being planned for the autumn. Glen Walford has joined them as guest director though it is too early to say whether the glittering and almost fairyland settings of the new designer, Rodney Ford, boken any permanent shift in pictorial style.

Where the History plays are bloody reality, the comic errors in Ephesus belong in a semi-mythical realm, brushed with magic, where everything ends happily. Even Dromio of Syracuse escapes the threat of having to bed down with his twin's fat wife.

The bewitching settings elevate the imagery of the sea to a more prominent level than the play really justifies. Ford drapes the two side pavilions with fishing nets, between which we see a blue-green watery depth and a ship becalmed. What instrumental

music there is comes from *The Flying Dutchman*, where the quest for unity has a very different outcome, but the vocal music of brief chants and keening is original, other-worldly, sometimes quite funny and nicely placed.

The details of this setting give occupation to the eye while the ear copes with the Abbess's long speech and the tedious arguments for wily duty. But when the twins are strutting their stuff the comedy helped by the striking physical resemblance of the actors.

Mark Anstee and John Elmes are indistinguishable as the two Antipholuses, yuppie braves forever stretching out their arms in madly heroic protests, and the crew-cut, gormless Dromios (Charles Dale, Stephen Jameson) also look identical, even when on stage together. This happy casting, and fine phrasing by Christopher Saul and John Darrell, make the evening a comic success despite the symbolic overview that Walford seems to have in mind.

"Mike Leigh meets Raymond Chandler... Fascinating, chilling, gripping and memorable... masterfully put together by a director with an enormous future ahead of him." **FILM REVIEW**

"Wiggle Greenwald has a magnificent taste for the surreal." **10**

"Dime store delirium." **TIMES**

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Ironically, the idea came from Peter Schaufuss, sacked last week as the artistic director of an English National Ballet, and from the Marchioness of Douro, who disappeared from the ENB board last month after the new chairman, Lady Harlech, took over. Lady Douro is still chairman of the school, though, and the guiding light of this enterprise.

"Proximity," she says, "plays a vital role. It has made it possible to harness the creativity of three colleges in a common endeavour towards a purer art form."

"I've heard of similar sorts of collaborations being done informally, but I've never heard of this before," says Tooley. "It gives choreographers, dancers, musicians and designers the chance to learn in their formative years the problems of creating a ballet."

هكذا من الأصل

THE ARTS/ROCK

Rose Rouse talks to the abrasive singer-songwriter Billy Bragg, who has just set up his own recording label

Pillow talk and pink politics

Billy Bragg should be renowned for the acuity of his tongue as much as for his socialist politics and his often intimate personal songs. Half-way through our conversation, he picks me up for including him in the pop star genre. "Careful with your terminology there, Rose, 'working musician', please," he says, with a provocative twinkle in his eye.

Bragg is often depicted as a dour left-winger. He is not. Humorous repartee is one of the chief weapons with which he is wont to goad his audience out of any indulgent complacency. At a recent concert, he chided the crowd for singing along to his lyrics, and sang new songs so they could not. He has also been known to give men in the audience a mini-lecture on bedroom tenderness. "What I'm trying to do, whether writing, singing or talking in between, is to communicate."

Neither is he politically predictable. Invited to East Germany last February because of his anti-Tory stance, Bragg refused to toe the GDR line and denounced the existence of the Berlin Wall on television. "I said: 'I went to the Berlin Wall yesterday and now I realize what it is - it's a nature reserve for the ecology-minded people of the GDR to protect the bunny rabbits of Berlin. That's wonderful, but personally I think it's time the bunny rabbits were allowed to run freely.'"

He was immediately informed that he would not be invited back to East Germany.

1989 was a travelling rather than a recording year for Bragg. "I don't think I have to have a single out every three months and an album every 18 months. I've always relied on live gigs to keep myself in the public eye," he said.

Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, Bolivia, America, Portugal, Switzerland, Mexico and Greece all featured on his itinerary for different reasons. "I didn't go to China to play," he says. "I just went for a butcher's." He arrived shortly before the events of



Is he a dour left-winger? Billy Bragg admits his fifth album is "political" at least insofar as it includes a rewritten version of The Internationale

Tiananmen Square, and met many young Chinese musicians. "They wanted to know about the ideas in the West and were very pro-Gorbachov," he said.

In the States, he found himself pursued by "anyone more interested in spicier politics than Tracey Chapman had to offer"; in Mexico he was dogged by practical difficulties. "We had to rewire all the halls because they had no earth. The guy who did it earned the PA to the front row of metal seats that the audience sits on."

Bragg regularly gives his audiences different ratings according to their reactions. "There's the 'we like you and we know every one of your songs better than you do' (Hackney Empire at New Year); there's the 'we're interested and gung-ho but we haven't bought all the records yet' (most of America); and finally the 'someone from England's playing guitar, let's all go' (Lithuania and Mexico)."

Depending on the level of linguistic comprehension, Bragg does either his chatty set or his "U2 in a football stadium" set.

Chiefly a songwriter rather than a singer - he sings with conviction rather than a wonderful voice - Bragg surprised his loyal followers in 1988 by releasing an album, *Workers Playtime*, that did not contain any political songs. Claiming disenchantment after the third Tory victory, Bragg decided to turn inward for inspiration. Songs such as "Valentine's Day is Over" even attempt to deal with what it feels like to be a victim of male violence as the woman in a relationship. "Women have said that I can't know what it's like, but I'm writing it for men," says Bragg.

At present, he is recording his fifth album: a political one. Apart from his own compositions, there is a new version of *The Internationale*. With characteristic gall,

Bragg has rewritten it. "Well, it definitely needed updating," he says. A reluctant studio person, Bragg says: "The studio is too precise, making records is a chore."

Billy Bragg, who doesn't drive a car and lives in a flat in Acton (but thankfully refrains from taking his laundry home to his mother), has made a fair bit of money over the last few years. Consequently, he decided to invest some of this in his own record label, Utility Records. "The idea is to deal with those people who are getting turned down by both major and independent labels. The indie scene has got as myopic as the mainstream one. I'm really fed up with it."

Utility has an ideology which consists of "not signing the band up for 100 records and not getting any money as an advance". So what do the artists gain from the experience? "A recording contract

that's long-term on their terms," he says. "It's a step up; they don't go naked and unknown to other record companies and feel pressured into accepting their terms."

In fact, Bragg would wholly approve if all the deals were one-off, where the musicians moved on as a result.

Utility has already released six albums. Newcomers on the label are Caroline Trettle, a folk singer with a sensual voice, and Clea and McLeod, two Scottish women who sing in a rousing vocal style about topics such as men and shop-lifting.

As I am about to leave, Bragg assesses himself. "In the end, I'm trying to be more than just a geezer playing songs. That's not enough," he says with genuine feeling.

Utility releases two albums. Beyond Our Means by Clea and McLeod and Be a Devil by Caroline Trettle, on February 26.

A glorious patchwork

ALBUMS
David Sinclair

The Blue Aeroplanes: *Swagger* (Ensign CHEN 13)

It is difficult to think of a group with a more severe presentation problem than that of the Blue Aeroplanes. To add to the dull name, there is the archetypal indie ghetto image, the self-conscious and irritatingly hyperactive live show, and now a cheap monochrome video to advertise the current single "Jacket Hangs", so awful that it stood out like a yarmulka in a mosque on *The Chart Show* last week. Small wonder that the band has achieved the unusual feat of releasing four albums while remaining virtually unknown.

On the credit side, they come from Bristol - hardly an area to rival Manchester, but nevertheless a city that is quietly gaining an air of music business credibility - and their fifth album, *Swagger*, is so exceptionally good that people will simply have to take notice.

Produced by Gil Norton (Pixies, Echo & the Bunnymen, the Triffids), *Swagger* is a glorious, swirling patchwork of massed chiming guitars overlaid by the stream-of-consciousness lyrics of Gerard Langley who intones rather than sings in a lilting voice that is suggestive of how Andy White might have sounded if he had been raised in the south of England instead of Belfast. The overall effect is redolent of the way in which Mark Knopfler can make his indistinct vocal grunt sound tuneful by entwining it round guitar lines of supreme melodic acuity.

The gladiatorial interplay between the group's three guitarists produces a wealth of exquisitely romantic tunes and textures ranging from the tough Neil Young-like chop and thrust of "Jacket Hangs", to the achingly beautiful, Van Morrison-tinged "Weightless". R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe contributes backing vocals to "What It Is", another stirring piece of metaphysical moodiness underpinned by lovely, twinkling arpeggios threaded together like pearls on a string.

Forget what you have or have not heard about the Blue Aeroplanes, and make investigation of this album a priority.

The Havalinas: *The Havalinas* (Elektra EKT 89)

Despite being "personally selected" by cranky old Bob Dylan as the support group on his current European dates, the Havalinas have turned in a better-than-decent debut. Although newcomers collectively, singer and multi-instrumentalist Tim McConnell and bassist Smutty Smith have been comparing tattoos since they were both members of the New York punkabilly band the Rockits ten years ago. Joined by Chalo Quintana, the charismatic, chain-smoking drummer formerly of LA-Mex

rockers the Cruzados, they have forged an attractive rootsy rock sound by using mainly acoustic instruments to punch out a raft of chunky, sometimes country-inspired songs with a cheerful, pugnacious energy.

McConnell sings with a chomping Jagger-like sneer on "High Hopes" and the pumping "Why Didn't It?", which sounds like an outtake from a Green On Red album, while elsewhere the mood varies from the decidedly Dylanish feel of the delightfully poignant ballad "Don't Feel Bad" to the elegant cod-reggae rhythm of "Inexperienced", which borrows its haunting chord sequence from Iggy Pop's classic "The Passenger".

Camper Van Beethoven: *Key Lime Pie* (Virgin America VUSLP 8)

Apart from boasting the sort of irrepressibly quirky nature which is guaranteed to reduce the keenest of critics to a trembling jelly of approval while ensuring that the majority of record buyers keep their money in their pockets, Camper Van Beethoven have few musical qualities that could easily be categorized. They are, roughly speaking, a Californian equivalent of those Australian art-rock divinities, the Triffids, but there is a much more forceful side to chief Camper Dennis Lowery than anything the Triffids' David McComb has ever put on public display.

Despite some splashes of country steel guitar on "Sweethearts" and the less plains ambience of "Borderline" with its frayed harmonica embellishments, the mood of *Key Lime Pie* is dictated by the sombre tones of Morgan Fichter's violin. There is a haunting, melancholy quality to her playing that makes "June" with its military snare drum figure, sound funeral, and adds a weird, surreal grace to "All Her Favourite Fruit", a song which reminds me of the gristly moments of early Fairport Convention.

Lowery claims that their version of Status Quo's psychedelic bubblegum ode "Pictures of Matchstick Men" is intended as a joke, but it is far superior to the original. Again it is the violin which dominates, making perfect sense of the scratchy, three-note instrumental motif for which the song is best remembered.

Jack Bruce: *A Question of Time* (Epic 485992 1)

As Eric Clapton winds up his 18-ninth residency at the Royal Albert Hall, his old bass-playing buddy from Cream is trying with mixed results to recreate the magic of long gone days. Stalwart lyricist Pete Brown is on hand, and even drummer Ginger Baker turns up on a couple of tracks, adding his two ha'pennyworth to the dense percussive undergrowth of "Hey Now Princess" and clobbering his way through the neo-"Sunshine of Your Love" rifferama of "Obsession". Other star guests include guitarist Allan Holdsworth and Vernon Reid of Living Colour.



The Havalinas: stadium sound doused with ecologically-caring lyrics

Compiled by David Sinclair, David Toop and Rose Rouse

LOS LEONES DE LA SIERRA: With a mixture of guitars and vocals, this eight-piece band from Mexico represents a style known as *Nueve Tons*. They are led by Guillermo Velazquez, a songwriter with a reputation for being a Mexican Woodie Guthrie. Ronnie Scott's, 47th Street, London, W1 (01-439 0747), Sunday, 8pm, £5.

A GUY CALLED GERALD: This Australian wizard of the drum machine and sampler has had his fair share of problems since "Voo Doo Ray" was a hit last year. A new record deal will surely help him fulfil his potential. Brunel University, Cleveland Road, Uxbridge (0895 39125), Sunday, 6.30pm, £5.

NEW JERSEY MATHEMATICS CHORUS: Whatever your religious beliefs, gospel shows by visiting Americans have an uncanny ability to raise a lump in the throat by the sheer force of emotion which they project. This experienced choir is likely to prove no exception. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, London, W1 (01-580 5552), tomorrow, 7.30pm, £5 and £12.

THE HAVALINAS: Polished rock band from LA, who came over here as support for Bob Dylan, going for a stadium sound doused with ecologically-caring lyrics.

The Borderline, off Charing Cross Road, London, WC2 (01-497 2261), today, 8pm, £5.

LOOP: Orol Midlands sold heads whose new album, *A Gifted Enemy*, is an utterly formless assemblage of grungy guitar riffs, battered down by a clearly overcooked bass and coloured by the merest hint of an airy vocal. Queens Hall, Morley Street, Bradford (0274 392712), tonight, 7pm, £4-£5. Leadmill, Leadmill Road, Sheffield (0748 754500), Saturday, 8.30pm, £2.50-£3. Junction 10, Bentley Road North, Walsall (0922 848100), Sunday, 7pm, £4.

BRIDLANDS: After a promising debut at No.32, their "Sleep With Me" single drops back this week, but their aggressive indie stance continues to get them plastered all over the music press. Leeds Polytechnic, Woodhouse Lane (0532 430171), tonight, 8pm, £4.50. Nottingham Polytechnic (0602 476725), Sunday, 7.30pm, £4.50. Network, Tottercross, Edinburgh (081 226 7010), Monday, 7.30pm, £5.50.

DEL AMITRE: After teetering on the brink of success for so long, the Glaswegian four-piece has deservedly breached the Top 20 with the utterly restrained single "Nothing Ever Happens". Nottingham Polytechnic, Nottingham (0602 476725), tonight, 7.30pm, £3.50. Coventry Polytechnic, Priory Street (0203 651815), Saturday, 7.30pm, £3.50. Blackfield, All Saints Street, Bristol (0272 268514), Sunday, 7.30pm, £4.

Rap music is shedding its old ghetto image of drugs, guns and sexism, reports David Toop

The blighted hopes of blip culture

Popular music has enjoyed more than its fair share of dramatic, unbelievable stories, but one of the greatest fairy-tales of them all is the history of rap. In February, six years ago, I had just returned from New York with a mountain of research material to begin the first chapter of a book called *The Rap Attack*. Convinced as I was that the creative phase of rap was over, 1984 seemed the year for a definitive overview.

The revision of my thesis began as I sat in a Manhattan recording studio and watched one of the most prominent rap groups of the period recording songs for a feature film called *Beat Street*. Rap was invading its way into the mainstream, and entering one of its periodic phases of renewal.

The origins of rap are obscure. It began during the latter half of the 1970s, its chief exponent a Jamaican-born disc jockey called Kool Herc from the South Bronx. The grand concourses and burnt-out buildings in this predominantly black and Hispanic borough epitomize the blighted hopes of race relations in America. Below the Bronx is Harlem, full of rich history but now a disaster zone with a lower life expectancy for young black males than that of Bangladesh.

In these areas, rap gestated until 1979, finally breaking out of a circuit of private parties and local clubs with the release of a handful of records. Those first rap singles, all issued on small independent labels, profoundly affected the music industry. They also changed our conception of the means by which music can be made.

Rap pioneered the idea of making music through the creative abuse of record turntables, vintage vinyl, drum machines and digital samplers. The rhythmic monologue which was recorded over this montage harks back to pre-slavery African and African-American culture.

But the concoction appealed to intellectuals, who saw rap as the supreme expression of post-modernism, creative retro, television-inspired blip-culture and goodness knows what else. For young blacks it was also an opportunity to participate in that elusive American Dream.

As it turned out, 1984 was a



The Jungle Brothers are among the innovators of rap, challenging musical and lyrical forms and stereotypes

critical year for rap. Hollywood dabbled with a few rap musicals, breakdancing became a worldwide fad and groups like Run-D.M.C. recorded hits which made no concessions to the white pop market. Rap became the voice, and in a sense the stigma, of the young black male. With drug abuse soaring in America's cities, poor areas became virtual war zones and rap was the soundtrack.

In consequence, much of the best rap produced between 1985 and 1988 was ignored by outsiders. Serious, witty, innovative acts like Run-D.M.C. and Eric B. & Rakim became tainted by the expectation of alienating violence and misogyny. But over the last few years the claustrophobic air of guns, drugs, sexism and self-aggrandisement has begun to clear. Rap is losing its image as the unwelcome noise made by a racial underclass.

Rap acts such as The Jungle Brothers, De La Soul, X-Clan, Queen Latifah, Digital Underground, A Tribe Called Quest, Divine Styler, DJ Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince and Lakim Shabazz have produced music which challenges the musical and lyrical form

of popular music. Their records have deployed dense overlays and juxtapositions of sound, some new, some stolen from the past, with lyrics that reveal a strong, positive identity. Stereotypes are attacked with a philosophy which looks to Africa, to Islam, to feminism and mysticism, in the desperate search for a self-image which can stand up against the plague of drugs and despair.

The American Secretary of Health and Human Services recently suggested that "the young black American male is a species in danger". In the light of such pronouncements, the new wave of rap has more hanging on its success than mere record sales. Having sustained itself and grown as an art form and a business over the last 15 years, it must now bear the burden of being a sign of hope.



DJ Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince: they feature dense overlays of sound

Partially rendered

BOOK REVIEW
David Sinclair

Rockonomics: *The Money Behind the Music* by Marc Eliot Omnibus £12.95

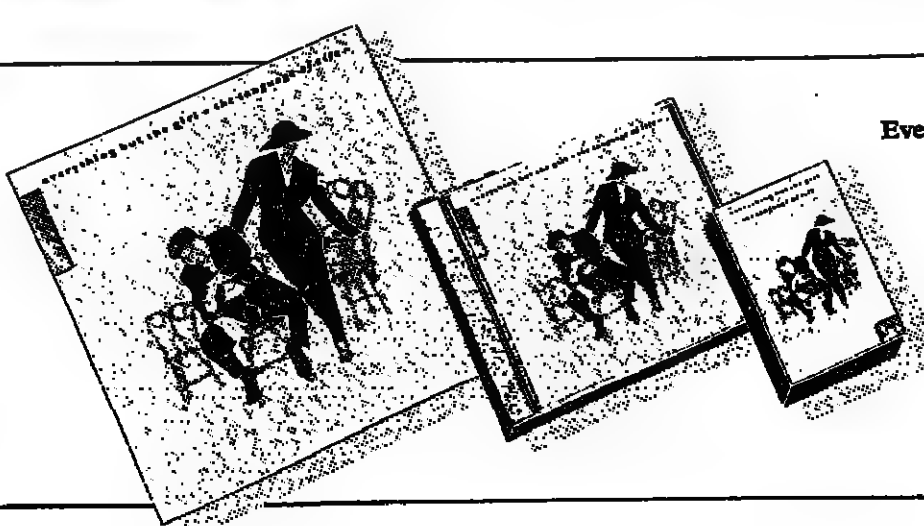
Despite the radical idealism which most rock stars casually espouse, the industry in which they have all chosen to work and hope to prosper has traditionally been run according to an ethos of laissez-faire gone mad. Mick Jagger probably spoke more truthfully and more plainly than most when he said "If you don't go for as much money as you can possibly get, then I think you're stupid".

Accordingly, Marc Eliot, an actor turned writing graduate of Columbia University, attempts to trace the history of rock in terms of the economic imperatives which have had crucial influence on the affairs of its prime movers.

Unfortunately his enquiries have not focused on anything particularly new, and no matter how detailed the account, the time hardly seems ripe for yet another trawl through the murky waters of Fifties' payola and the demise of Alan Freed, or Colonel Tom Parker's notoriously venal handling of Elvis Presley's career, or Allen Klein's various run-ins with the Beatles and the Stones, or Berry Gordy's setting up of Motown, or the deals that went down backstage at Woodstock.

Eliot's account, which is almost entirely related to the American side of the industry, does not even reach the Eighties until Chapter 19 (out of 22) and then proceeds to skip through the decade in a dead prose style that vacillates between that of the hip academic - "While it may not be everyone's bag, there's no denying the pervasive influence of rap music, particularly among today's economically disenfranchised urban street youth" - and the financial pages: "49 albums went platinum in 1983, down 11 per cent from the 55 albums of the previous year and a full 25 per cent from the 66 that had made it in 1980".

There is doubtless an entertaining and enlightening book to be written on the business structures that have evolved to service such a powerful and glamorous global industry, but this is not it.



ALBUM OF THE WEEK
Everything But The Girl/The Language Of Life LP £5.99, Cassette £5.99, CD £10.99

This stunning new album from Everything But The Girl comprises ten tracks, including the atmospheric new single, "Driving".

Prices correct at time of going to press. Available at all W H Smith Sounds Stockists.

WH SMITH
More to discover

everything but the girl

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Executive Editor
David Brewerton

THE POUND

US dollar
1.6875 (-0.0110)
W German mark
2.8240 (+0.0122)
Exchange index
89.1 (-0.1)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1845.3 (+19.1)

FT-SE 100
2331.0 (+23.6)

USM (Datastream)
156.04 (+0.59)

Market report, page 25

Ward falls to £7.22m

Ward Holdings saw its profits from housing construction collapse in the year ended October 31 - from £12.9 million to £1.04 million - which left the group with a year end pre-tax profit of £7.22 million against £14.4 million. At the net level, profits fell from £9.53 million to £4.46 million.

The final stays at 2.1p to make 2.6p again, out of net earnings down from 18.1p to 8.5p a share.

Turnover was £63.4 million against £59.7 million, with a poorer house construction figure offset by increased property investment and commercial development. There was a substantial loss on London housing operations.

Loss forecast

Strong & Fisher (Holdings), the leather manufacturer, expects a further loss for the six months to December 29, but an improvement on the £1.9 million loss in the second half last year. *Temper, page 22*

STOCK MARKETS

New York
Dow Jones 2880.33 (+10.14)
Tokyo
Nikkei Average 37518.24 (+214.37)
Hong Kong
Hang Seng 2903.77 (+58.88)
Amsterdam
ASEX 111.31 (+1.12)
Sydney
ASX 1648.4 (+2.8)
Frankfurt
DAX 1915.79 (+15.05)
Brussels
General 8116.13 (-48.03)
Paris
CAC 819.22 (-2.51)
Zurich
SIX 816.2 (+0.3)
FT-A All-Share 1184.32 (+0.77)
FT-100 1288.10 (+11.58)
FT Gold Mines 372.5 (-2.8)
FT 100 Index 1184.32 (+0.77)
FT Govt Secs 81.25 (+0.48)

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

RESE:
Globe Met 604p (-10p)
Globe 705p (-10p)
Cable & Wireless 558p (-10p)
Harland Simon 710p (-10p)
Mandarin 720p (-10p)
Micro Focus 497p (-10p)
BOC 542p (-10p)
Davies & Met 'A' 275p (-20p)
Nu-Sort 517p (-25p)
Antofagasta 500p (-10p)
WPP 697p (-21p)
Shell 485p (-10p)
Carlson Comm 780p (-10p)
Reckitt 350p (-31p)
PJ Carrol 185p (-13p)
FALLS:
S Miller 121p (-20p)
D&M Simpson 'A' 127p (-15p)
Vale & Valer 287p (-12p)
Eliel 32p (-13p)
News Corp 482p (-20p)
Closing prices
SEAO Volume 458.0m

INTEREST RATES

Lombard Bank Base 15%
3-month interbank 15.1%
3-month eligible bills 14.1%
US Prime Rate 10%
Foreign Funds 8.7%
3-month Treasury Bills 7.80-7.78%
30-year bonds 9.80-9.70%

CURRENCIES

London:
£: \$1.6875
£: DM2.8240
£: Sfr2.5211
£: FF9.3655
£: Yen245.19
£: Index89.1
ECU 80.723085
ECU1.362985
New York:
£: \$1.6875
£: DM1.6725
£: Sfr1.4945
£: FF7.5840
£: Yen145.33
£: Index57.0
SDR1.727512
SDR1.277335

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM \$418.50 pm \$418.00
AM \$416.75-417.25 (247.00-247.50)
New York:
Comex \$417.50-418.00

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Mar) \$19.75bbl (\$19.70)
Dumfries latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank
Australia S	2.25	2.17
Bank of America	2.25	2.17
Barclays	2.25	2.17
Belgium Fr	2.10	1.98
Canada	2.10	1.98
Deutsche Kr	2.10	1.98
France F	2.10	1.98
Germany DM	2.10	1.98
Hong Kong S	2.10	1.98
India Rupee	2.10	1.98
Japan Yen	2.10	1.98
Netherlands Gld	2.10	1.98
Portugal Esc	2.10	1.98
Spain Ptas	2.10	1.98
South Africa Rand	2.10	1.98
Sweden Kr	2.10	1.98
Switzerland Fr	2.10	1.98
Turkey Lira	2.10	1.98
USA \$	2.10	1.98
Yugoslavia Dnr	2.10	1.98

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques.
Retail Price Index: 118.5 (December)

East Europe rates threat fear by Bank

By Colin Narborough, Economics Correspondent

The Bank of England fears that the opening up of Eastern Europe is putting inflationary pressure on West Germany. Europe's economic powerhouse, and threatens to create a high interest rate climate across the region.

Concerned that monetary tightening overseas and high British wage settlements could weaken the pound and push up costs and prices in Britain more rapidly, the Bank calls on the Government in its latest *Quarterly Bulletin* to maintain a firm fiscal stance and prevent any relaxation of monetary conditions.

In line with the Treasury projection, it expects the economy to slow markedly this year, but identifies risks of even lower activity and higher inflation. Given high debt servicing costs, sharper-than-expected cutsbacks in personal and corporate spending cannot be ruled out.

The Bank's anxieties about the economic impact of developments in Eastern Europe coincide with fears expressed by Herr Karl Otto Pöhl, president of the Bundesbank, who has urged a cautious approach to Eastern Europe so as not to jeopardise West German and Western Europe's stability.

But the West German government's political priorities appear to have secured reluctant support from Herr Pöhl for urgent talks with East Germany on economic and monetary union. The prospect of early union, on top of the massive inflow of East German funds, has fuelled fears in the

financial markets about inflation in West Germany. The Bank said: "Given the pivotal role of integration with West Germany will call for considerable care if the transitions is to be smooth."

Though pleased that the pound has recovered, without a base rate increase, from its lows of last year, the Bank is worried that Britain could come under renewed pressure to raise rates if West Germany and Japan move higher.

It was a West German base rate increase last October which forced UK base rates up to 15 per cent.

In Frankfurt, the DAX index of 30 leading shares closed at 1,915.79, up 15.69 points.

German shares have risen nearly 34 per cent since East Germany threw open its borders in November. The mark eased back yesterday as dealers sought to assess developments and a more positive sentiment emerged for the dollar.

On the UK economy, the Bank said the downward trend in growth of demand and output is now "firmly established." Consumer spending has fallen sharply.

However, it describes the financial picture as "more obscure", with lending to households much more subdued last year, but lending to business "erratic". The Bank said UK inflation remained "uncomfortably high" and recent sterling weakness may have added to inflationary pressures. The inflation rate is likely to remain "fairly volatile" over the coming months.

Comment: 23
6 per cent in effective terms in the second half of last year, dampening inflationary pressures, the Bank believes adverse developments in Eastern Europe would have a negative effect and the "potential for further domestically-generated inflation remains significant." For the early part of this year, however, it anticipates West German inflation easing.

A realignment of exchange rates within the European Monetary System is seen as one way of lowering West German inflation, but the Bank sees such a move raising inflationary pressure elsewhere.

Though the Bank considers it too early to gauge the scale and composition of capital flows to Eastern Europe, it foresees this extra demand putting upward pressure on

Victory for auditor in 'care' case

By Angela Mackay

Touche Ross, the auditor, has won a landmark case in the House of Lords which ruled its duty of care did not extend to potential investors in a company audited by the firm.

The accounting firm appealed against a ruling made in the Court of Appeal that auditors have a duty of care to individual shareholders of a company when preparing their audit.

The ruling narrows the duty of care owed third parties by auditors of public accounts.

Caparo Group, Mr Swraj Paul's private holding company, was trying to establish that Touche Ross owed Caparo a duty of care as the firm audited the accounts of takeover target Fidelity, the audio and television company.

Caparo alleged that Fidelity's assets had been inflated by £10 million when the company was bought from the Dickman family in 1984. The case was a preliminary issue to Caparo's potential claim for £14 million in damages against the auditors.

The Law Lords' decision, however, does not affect auditors' liability to their clients for any losses that can be attributed to auditor negligence.

Touche Ross argued a management should not be allowed to blame the adverse consequences of an investment decision based solely on the information in accounts on the auditors of those accounts.

Hilton hotels head leaves Ladbroke to start own business

By Martin Waller and Melinda Whitstock

Mr John Jarvis, head of Ladbroke Group's Hilton International hotels division and the man widely tipped as heir apparent to Mr Cyril Stein, chairman, has left abruptly to set up his own hotels chain in this country.

The news came as a surprise to the City, and the shares, on an otherwise good day for the stock market, were marked back 6p to 306p.

He is succeeded by Mr Michael Hirst, his deputy at Hilton, who joined the same year that he did, in 1975. Ladbroke said the split was amicable and there was no question of compensation. "We have accepted the surrender of his service contract. He is setting up his own business."

He denied Mr Jarvis had occupied any particularly high position on the Ladbroke board.

"We have a very young board of directors, all of whom are regarded as heirs apparent. There are a series of young turks waiting to take over from Cyril," he said.

But one analyst, asked about the reason for the apparent split, commented: "Everybody is asking the same question. He was the driving force - he was the guy who was expected to take over from Cyril Stein."

Mr Jarvis, in Amsterdam at an airport Hilton yesterday afternoon, said: "I want to emphasize that this is totally amicable. The only thing to do after running the world's number one hotel company is to set up on my own."

"It is hardly unexpected. It's been more than two years since I achieved the chairmanship in October 1987 when we bought Hilton and now the time is right to be independent."

Mr Jarvis declined to comment on his new business plans, but said the new UK hotel operations would be in "an entirely different realm" from the Hilton chain.

Mr Hirst, who admitted he was surprised by the resignation, said there would be no change of direction at Hilton whatsoever. He said he was sorry to see Mr Jarvis go.

Comment: 23
The cheques came from a Barclays Bank high interest account held by Trailgrove, a Garston subsidiary. Garston held the rest of the investor's money in various accounts, and even illicitly bought shares in DRG, Regentcrest and Hanson warrants.

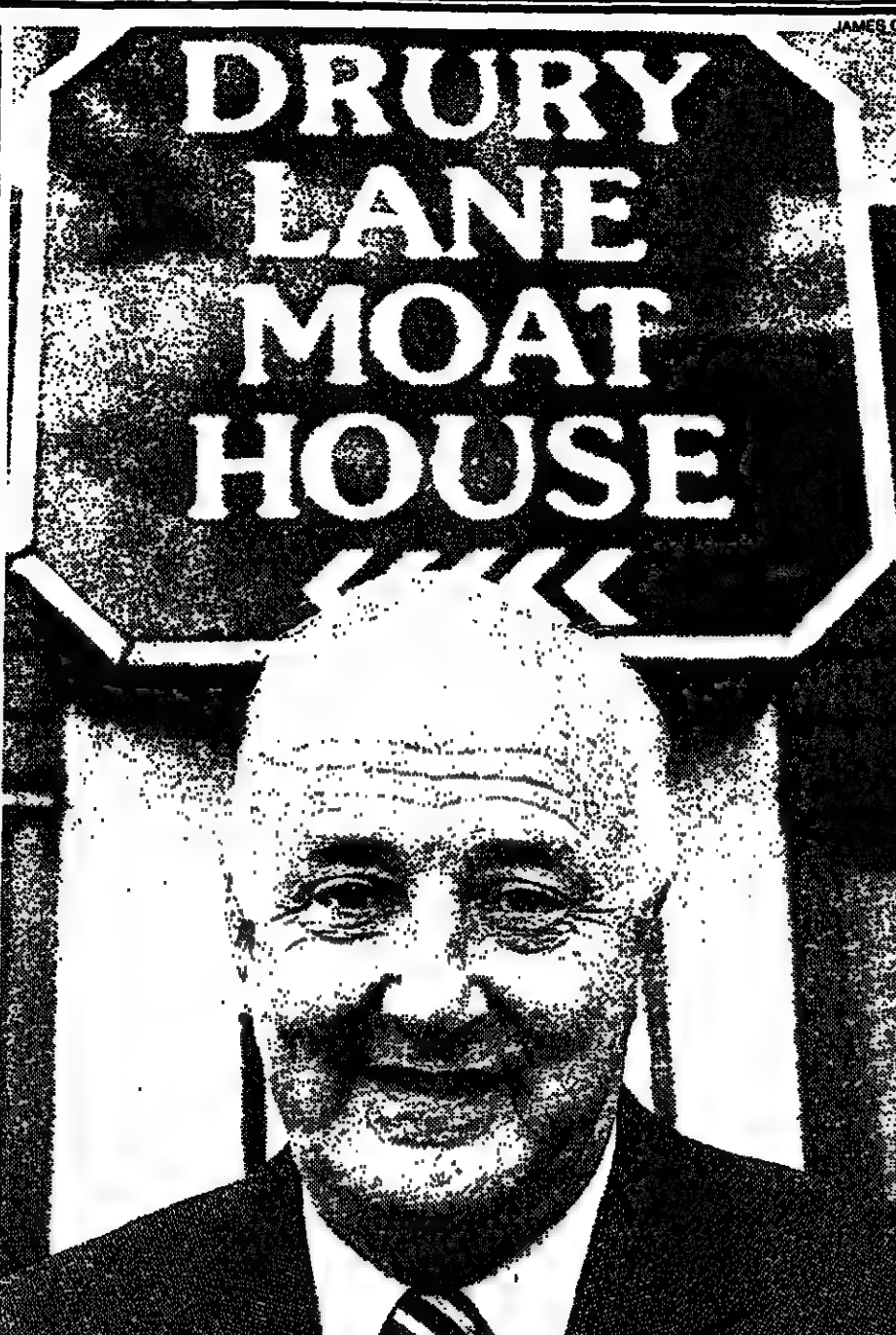
The investor asked Garston to close his account in November, but was told

clients funds. Much of the money is still thought to be missing. But the investor, a Surrey businessman who stands to lose up to £140,000 in Garston's collapse, says that Garston paid a set of annual premiums on NFMC income policies in March 1989, after the Financial Services Act came into force.

He believes NFMC should have examined Garston as soon as it realized it was running its own client funds and investigated immediately. Instead NFMC did not order an audit until December last year.

Garston was a tied agent of NFMC and legally only allowed to sell NFMC's policies.

Since its liquidation last month, the Serious Fraud Office has discovered it had up to £20 million in unauthorized



'Our intention was not to be hostile': John Baird, chairman of Queens Moat, yesterday

Queens Moat declares offer for Norfolk final

By Matthew Bond

Queens Moat Houses, the commercial hotel group, will not be increasing its all-share bid for Norfolk Capital, a rival hotel group.

Mr John Baird, Queens Moat chairman, yesterday declared its offer final.

The Queens Moat share price moved immediately higher as the market showed relief that the company would not be making a higher offer, or offering a cash alternative. Only if a third party bids for Norfolk will Queens Moat consider a higher bid.

The share price rise enabled Beeson Gregory, Queens Moat's stockbroker, to mount a raid on Norfolk shares. It snatched up 7.7 million before the Norfolk price recovered. Queens Moat now owns 6.3

per cent. The market raid came exactly two weeks after launching its bid for Norfolk.

Explaining why he had not declared the bid final from the start, Mr Baird said he had hoped to reach an agreement with the Norfolk board and had deliberately avoided such a hostile opening gambit.

"Our intention was not to be hostile. But now it seems to me only right and proper that we should state our position and go final," said Mr Baird, who admitted his disappointment at the lack of response from the Norfolk board.

In declaring the offer final Mr Baird also unveiled a results forecast for 1989, with pre-tax profits not less than £62 million, up 47 per cent on

1988, fully diluted earnings per share 25 per cent higher at 7.54p, and net assets per share at 125p.

Queen Moat's two-week period of grace seemed to have been wasted on Mr Anthony Richmond-Watson, the Norfolk chairman. Responding to the bid being declared final, he said: "Shareholders will not like being at the receiving end of such bully-boy tactics. The bid undervalues Norfolk Capital."

"Our view is that they were forced into this position by their share price falling."

When Queens Moat launched the bid it was worth £185 million. At yesterday's share price the 2-for-5 share swap valued Norfolk at £176 million.

Property boost for Budgens

By Gillian Bowditch

Pre-tax profits of the Budgens supermarket group jumped 82.7 per cent to £11.7 million in the six months to November. But property profits accounted for £6.99 million of this and operating profits from food retailing only rose 3.7 per cent to £7.36 million.

Sales advanced 9.6 per cent to £158 million and earnings per share improved from 3.46p to 8.71p. The interim dividend is held at 2p.

Budgens' shares gained 3p to 97p.

Mr John Fletcher, the chairman and chief executive, said that trading in the first few months of the second half had been difficult as high interest rates began to bite into his customers' pockets. The 145 stores are mostly in the South-east.

Temper, page 22

BT dials £695m in third quarter

By Graham Searjeant, Financial Editor

Buoyant demand, a pensions holiday and the first increase in regulated prices for three years helped British Telecom make pre-tax profits of £695 million in the three months to end-December, the third quarter of its financial year.

The 11.6 per cent increase over the £623 million profit in same quarter a year ago was at the top end of City forecasts, although BT had made £678 million in the second quarter. BT shares gained 7p to 305p.

Turnover was 10.5 per cent up at £3.08 billion and earnings per share for the quarter

were 14.8 per cent higher at 7.6p.

For the first nine months, pre-tax profits rose by 7.8 per cent to £2.01 billion on a 10.2 per cent rise in turnover to £9.04 billion. Earnings per share rose 10 per cent.

City forecasts suggest BT profits should top £2.7 billion for the full year to end-March.

Mr Iain Vallance, the chairman, said the results showed continuing strength in demand for telecommunications services, in spite of the general slowdown in the economy.

Over 1989, the volume of inland telephone calls rose by more than 9 per cent and international calls by 12 per cent.

New connections boosted the network by 4.4 per cent, although BT sees a slowdown in the 9.4 per cent increase in business connections.

Operating costs rose by 8.1 per cent in the third quarter, helped for the second quarter by a £50 million holiday on pension fund contributions.

But interest charges for the quarter were up £52 million to £132 million, reflecting the investment in McCaw Cellular Communications and Tymnet in the US, as well as capital spending on the system.

Mr Graeme Odgers, BT's managing director, said the \$1.5 billion investment in McCaw had been much criticised. "We paid a lot of money but McCaw is going to make a lot of profit."

"Only time will tell whether it is a good investment, but it is not a high-risk investment."

Celnet, BT's joint venture cellular communications business, raised its contribution to profits sharply but BT acknowledged it was about a year behind Racal, Telecom's rival Vodafone.

WARRINGTON RUNCORN



ENGLAND'S CENTRAL PROPERTY PORTFOLIO

On the 1st October 1989, the Commission for the New Towns took over responsibility for the industrial and commercial property assets of the Warrington-Runcorn Development Corporation and opened its offices for the nation's most central location in Warrington.

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TEMPUS

Budgens alone among the big boys

Budgens, the supermarket group run by Mr John Fletcher, is resigned to a life of solitude having failed in its courtship of the Gateway group in 1988, and been jilted by Scottish supermarket group Wm Low last year.

But, as yesterday's half-year figures show, going it alone is tough if you are a small food retailer with only 1 per cent of the British market especially when you are up against Sainsbury, Tesco and Safeway who have more than 30 per cent between them.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to November were up 82.7 per cent at £11.7 million, but property profits accounted for £6.99 million of that and profits from food retailing rose only 3.7 per cent to £7.36 million. Sales rose 9.6 per cent to £158 million and EPS from 5.46p to 8.71p. The interim dividend is static at 2p.

Budgens is making the most of its solitary existence, concentrating in the South-east and repositioning and upgrading its stores. The new-look Budgens is attractive but the redevelopment is expensive and gearing is about 50 per cent. The interest charge rose from £1.08 million to £1.87 million in the first half, after capitalizing £419,000.

Trading has become tougher in the second half. Mr Fletcher will not be drawn further than that. The £6.99 million came from the sale of five stores, four of which were bought by Marks and Spencer.

Indeed there are those who believe M&S might like the whole group. But M&S is unlikely to pay the 154p offered by Wm Low before it pulled out of the agreed deal. Budgens shares rose 3p to 97p putting them on a prospective p/e of 11 assuming full-year profits of £11.2 million (Goldman Sachs).

At the end of its reorganization, Budgens may be in the right place to cater for unmet customers but it still has some way to go and trading could be difficult in the meantime. Mr Ron Brierley's IEP Securities has a 7 per cent stake and a bid is still a possibility. But the group is not likely to see the sort of premium Wm Low was offering and the shares are unlikely to outperform in the short term.

BOC

BOC's shares have been remarkably good performers in recent months. At one stage, they were up by a fifth since the preliminary results for 1988-89 were announced in November.

Even now, up 9p at 535p after the first-quarter figures, they are still a tenth better than they were in the closing months of last year.

There are several reasons for this recent enthusiasm for BOC. For a start, Mr Richard Giordano, BOC's chairman, has said that any recession in Europe or North America will



Resigned to a life of solitude in the supermarket field: John Fletcher of Budgens

not affect the company in the current year.

This confidence was backed by the promise of dividends totalling 19p, virtually maintaining the 15 per cent annual growth of the last five years.

The first-quarter figures did nothing to dispel the impression that BOC will make it through the current year unscathed. Pre-tax profits rose by 7 per cent to £81.5 million in the three months to December, leaving earnings per share 9 per cent ahead at 11.3p.

The geographical breakdown appears to indicate a strong showing in Europe —

with pre-tax profits up 29 per cent — and a lacklustre performance in the Far East, where they actually fell slightly.

However, this is quite misleading and arises because corporate expenses and currency hedging operations are charged to Europe. In fact, sales volume rose by 13 per cent in Japan, against just 3 per cent in Europe.

Analysts are keeping to their forecasts of £365 million before tax and earnings of 53p this year, leaving the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 10.

BOC's consistent progress will be increasingly striking as other industrial companies

begin to report falling earnings and the shares remain attractive.

Strong & Fisher

Strong & Fisher must rue the day it first grappled with Pittard Garnier. Twice it has bid since 1986 and twice it was forced to face the Monopolies Commission.

By the time its plans were cleared last spring FG was over its earlier troubles. S&F, on the other hand, was running into trading problems of

its own, which eventually translated into a £2 million loss in the second half of last year. Worse, as it turned out, it had spent £16 million on a 27.4 per cent stake in PG. Today that stake is worth only about £6.5 million, and has brought S&F to its knees.

Given that stocks are traditionally at the highest at this time of year, group borrowings are thought to be running in excess of £40 million, against net assets of £25 million last June.

Facing interest costs of about £7 million a year, the prospect of a £2 million write-down on its Gornshall plant, and possible provisions on sheepskin stocks, S&F does not expect to report a profit for the six months to end-December. It can hardly hope for one in the second half, either.

S&F's bankers clearly want to see some disposals before they agree to any permanent new arrangement. Gornshall, however, has failed to attract a buyer so far, and the obvious move is to unload the PG shares. PG would be delighted to round up some friendly institutions to take up the stake, but at a discount to the market price, naturally.

A merger with PG begins to look a necessity rather than a preference for S&F. It may yet happen, if PG can see enough advantage in removing its biggest rival. If it does not, S&F shares, at 85p, have little to recommend them.

Mitsubishi confirms stake in Paternoster

Mitsubishi Estate Company, the Japanese property group, has confirmed it will join the consortium developing Paternoster Square in the City, as suggested in *The Times* yesterday.

Mitsubishi is to inject £15 million of equity into the £700 million project, matching the sums invested by the two other members of the consortium, Greystar, a quoted developer whose shares rose 8p to 420p on the news, and Park Tower Realty, a private US company. An affiliate of Mitsubishi Estate is providing a loan to the partnership which secures the long-term finance for the site. Greystar and Park Tower Realty acquired the site, next to St Paul's Cathedral, for £150 million last year, and a planning application will be submitted this summer. The plans are being drawn up by a team of classical architects.

YRM interim rises by 18%

YRM, the building design consultancy, lifted pre-tax profits 18 per cent to £1.38 million in the half year to end-October. Group turnover advanced 70 per cent to £13.6 million, following expansion and technological investments. Earnings per share rose from 6.06p to 6.61p, while the interim dividend improved to 1.65p, against 1.25p.

Lloyds buys York chemist

Lloyds Chemists has acquired an FW Wood pharmacy in York for £540,000, bringing the number of stores in its network to 490. The deal is being financed through the issuing of 272,728 new Lloyds shares to be placed by Panmure Gordon at 195p. The pharmacy made trading profits of £58,000 in the year to end-December 1988.

Medeva issue shortfall

Medeva's £87 million rights issue to finance the takeover of fellow drug company Evans Healthcare has received 28.24 per cent acceptance. Underwriters, headed by Laid & Crickbank, will take up the balance of the 16-for-5 issue, at 100p. As a result of the issue Credit Lyonnais, the parent bank of Laid & Crickbank, will own 15.74 per cent of Medeva.

Mr Ian Gowrie Smith, managing director, said he was not too disappointed with the result of the issue because the underwriters had been counting on a shortfall, and his company is now 80 per cent owned by those intending to be long term shareholders.

Fall in beer production

Despite last year's good summer, beer production fell because of the squeeze on consumer spending, according to the Brewers' Society. However, lager and low alcohol beers continued to increase their market shares. Production during 1989 was 36,672,376 barrels, a 1 per cent decrease on the 1988 figure when 36,757,933 barrels were produced.

Elbief hit by sales decline

Shares in Elbief, the Birmingham manufacturer of handbags and photographic frames, clocks and mirrors, fell by 13p to 33p, following a decline in sales. Pre-tax profits fell from £25,000 to £70,000 in the six months to end-October, on turnover falling by £2.2 million to £2.3 million. The interim dividend was cut to 0.181p, against 0.585p last time.

GPT and Siemens link

GPT, the communications group 60 per cent owned by GEC, has announced a global project strategy for the development of business communications with Siemens of West Germany. Work has already started on integrating the network features of GPT's best-selling ISDX digital exchange and Hicom, Siemens flagship product. GPT said its co-operation with the German group mirrored the joint product strategy of Rolan and Siemens in the US, based on Rolan's system 9750. It considers that ISDX will be the cornerstone of the new strategy.

ICA ruling council backs public sector merger plan

By Graham Searjeant, Financial Editor

The Institute of Chartered Accountants' ruling council has backed plans to allow chartered accountants to be trained outside professional offices for the first time and to merge with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa), the smaller, specialized public sector accounting body.

Mr Philip Cousie, ICA president, said the merger would give chartered accountants an entry into the public sector where they are poorly represented, and be a step forward in rationalizing the profession.

Members will vote on both proposals in June. A two-

thirds majority will be needed for the plans to go ahead.

Mr Cousie said that, given a well constructed information campaign, he believed members could be persuaded of the rightness of training in industry. But he admitted that persuading ICA members to vote for the Cipfa merger would take more work because of fears that it might dilute the profession. Since Cipfa members are trained within the public sector or at privatized companies such as British Telecom, approval for the outside training initiative is vital for the merger.

Members of the combined

institute, as of the ICA at present, would still be able to practice as auditors only if they had two years' experience with an accountancy practice after qualification.

Mr Cousie said Cipfa's training system, culture and percentage of graduate entry was similar to the ICA's. Training outside accountancy firms in the combined institute would still have to be supervised by a chartered accountant.

Cipfa, whose 10,500 members stand to suffer from the shrinkage of the public sector, is expected to give strong support to the merger.

Bond wind-up petitions still standing

From David Tynan, Sydney
The Supreme Court of Western Australia has dismissed two applications by Mr Alan Bond of Bond Corporation Holdings to quash wind-up petitions made by Bell Resources, its subsidiary, last week.

Bond Corporation was told its applications would be dismissed unless it could provide an affidavit affirming it was solvent.

Mr Alex Chernov, counsel for Bond Corporation, told the court the company would provide an affidavit, but as part of a new wider application.

The Bell Resources petitions are based on alleged debts of Aus\$24.16 million (£10.8 million) and Aus\$3.76 million.

Colonnade plan tops cash bid

By Jeremy Andrews

Counter-proposals have been issued by Colonnade Development Capital, the investment trust managed by British & Commonwealth, to the bid launched by Strategem, the quoted investment company.

The plan proposes to liquidate Colonnade's portfolio by December and return 204p to shareholders, providing 25 per cent more than Strategem's 163p cash bid. It would have the support of the local authority pension funds which dominate Colonnade's share register.

Colonnade would pay the 3.2p dividend in March, 99p once a capital reduction re-

ceived court approval in April, and the balance by the end of the year. However, repayment of the 204p would depend on the portfolio being realized at book value.

James Capel, Colonnade's adviser, said the directors believed they would be able to liquidate the portfolio at these values.

Mr Bernard Kerrison, Strategem's chairman, said: "Colonnade has not come out with anything which will shake the support of the 29.1 per cent who have indicated their intention to accept our offer."

Strategem already has 18.1 per cent of Colonnade.

GrandMet puts Alpo up for sale

Grand Metropolitan, the British drinks and foods group, is putting Alpo, its petfoods subsidiary which is sixth largest in the US, up for sale.

Alpo was acquired by GrandMet in 1980 as part of the purchase of Liggett, but does not fit into the group's international strategy.

GrandMet does not sell pet food in Britain, and the only way to expand its share in the US would be by an expensive acquisition, GrandMet said.

Alpo sales are running at about \$400 million (£237 million) and profits before tax and interest amounted to around \$45 million in the year to end-September.

On a p/e ratio in the mid-20s, analysts expect Alpo to fetch between \$600 million and \$700 million.

Hong Kong bridge link

Hong Kong is to construct the longest suspension bridge in the world at a cost of HK\$6.5 billion (£490 million), its government announced yesterday.

The bridge, the largest-ever private undertaking in the colony, will link urban Hong Kong to the site of a new airport on Lantau Island. It will have a central span of 1,413 metres, 130 metres longer than the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

The project is part of Hong Kong's HK\$127 billion master plan to build a massive port and airport infrastructure by 2006. It is expected to be completed in 1996, a year before the opening of the Lantau airport and the historic hand-over of the colony to China.

The government will invite tenders to finance, design, construct and operate the bridge in September, and has already placed advertisements in overseas newspapers.

Schneider lifts stake

Schneider has increased its holding in Sema Group to 7.68 per cent by purchasing the entire 4.5 million share stake previously held by The Worldwide Software Group.

Mr Pierre Bonelli, Sema managing director, said the company considered Schneider to be a supportive long-term shareholder, and he called it a positive development.

Castleman passes dividends as debt-burdened LIT loses £12m

By Neil Bennett

Shares in LIT Holdings, the futures settlements and business expansion scheme sponsor, slumped by a quarter to 25p yesterday when it revealed it is being forced to cancel all its dividends after attributable losses of more than £12 million in 1989.

Now LIT could be forced to sell stakes in either of its main businesses or mount an emergency rights issue before the summer to reduce debts of £76 million.

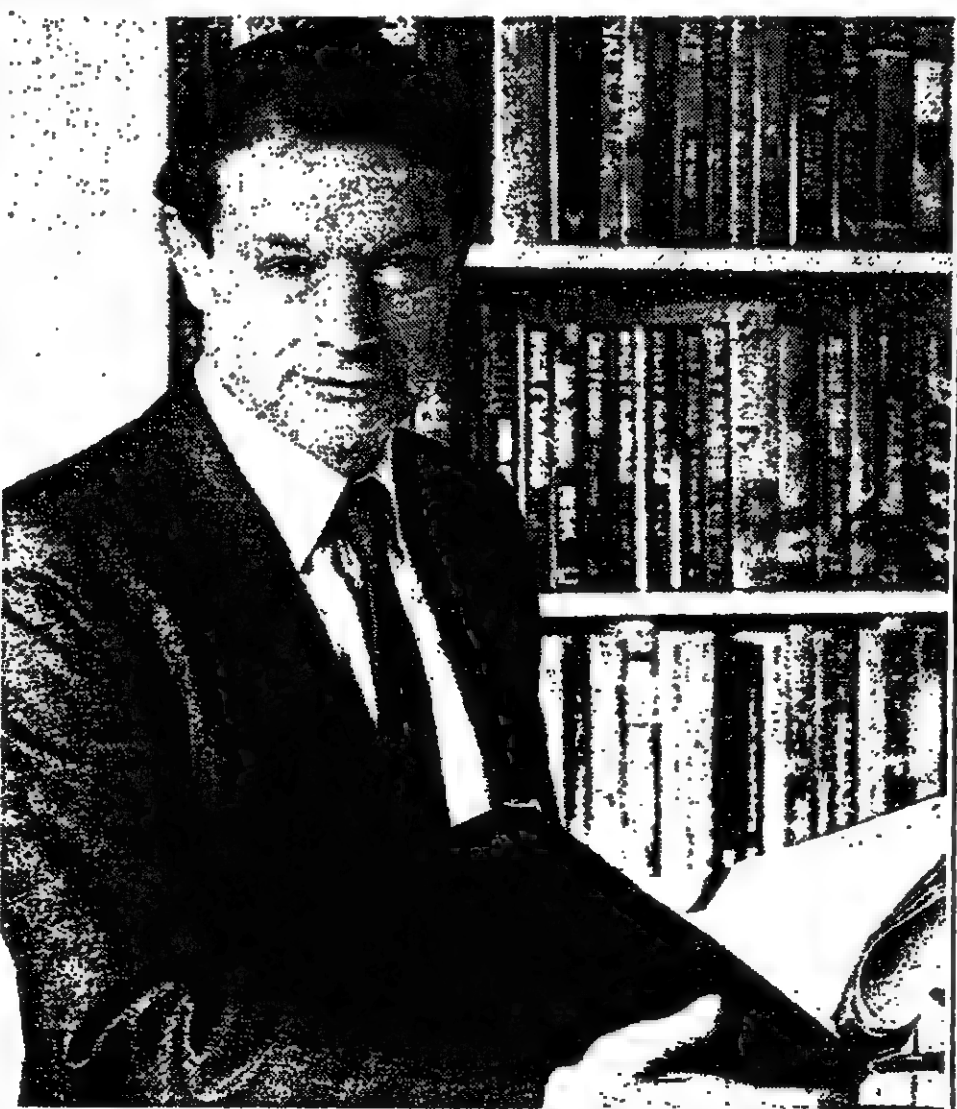
LIT's problems began in October, when its futures business in America lost £5 million in the stock market slump from put options. Since then, both Johnson Fry, the BES sponsor, and the American business have been trading badly, and are expected to show a trading loss for 1989.

Its difficulties have been compounded by a £3 million loss from the £16 million sale of a 33 per cent stake in Levitt, the personal finance company, and interest charges from the debt mountain.

Borrowings are now so high that LIT is having to ask shareholders' permission to rewrite its articles of association. Apart from Levitt, LIT hopes to sell up to £10 million in assets before June.

LIT's problems are a further blow to Mr Christopher Castleman, who joined as chief executive in October. Mr Castleman, once considered one of the most brilliant financiers in the City, resigned as chief executive at Hill Samuel after he negotiated to sell the company to Phillips & Drew, the broker.

After that he was head of Blue Arrow for only nine weeks, when he left after a



Christopher Castleman: facing rights issue or stake sales to take heat off £76 million debt

disagreement with Mr Tony Berry, the chairman.

"There could be no more fascinating assignment than this one," said Mr Castleman

after announcing LIT's problems. "LIT is taking up twice as many hours as I thought."

"The subsidiaries are viable. The problem is the size

of the holding company debt," he said. Mr Castleman did not say when he thought LIT could restart paying the £400,000 preference dividend.

Relief as Nu-Swift sells stake in fire group for £184m

By Colin Campbell

Nu-Swift, the fire-fighting equipment group, has finally sold its 88.3 per cent stake in SICLI, the French fire protection and detection group, to Sidi Participations for £17.9 billion (£184 million).

Nu-Swift shares rose 25p to 495p having touched 510p on news of the deal.

The sale, which will allow Nu-Swift to clear its borrowings and leave an estimated £100 million of net cash, is £30 million lower than last October's hoped-for sale of an 88.5 per cent stake to a triumvirate of Wasserstein Perella, Bankers Trust and LBO France, which fell through at the last minute.

Nu-Swift says the two sets of negotiations are not really comparable, but yesterday was clearly relieved that the SICLI deal had finally gone through.

On completion, Nu-Swift will enter into an agreement to ensure the supply of SICLI's fire protection products to the Nu-Swift group.

The deal is conditional on approval by shareholders and the French Treasury, and on confirmation by SICLI. Participations' auditors that the pre-interest profits for those parts being sold are at least £288 million (£30 million) for the year ended December 31, 1989.

In the year ended December, 1988, SICLI's turnover was £11.27 billion and pre-tax profits were £240 million. Net assets at December 31, 1988, were £298 million.

SICLI Participations will be controlled by a group of investors arranged by Rothschild & Cie and Drexel Burnham Lambert.

The new owners will make offers to acquire the balance of SICLI.

All existing shareholders of SICLI will receive a gross dividend of £4, payable out of 1989 profits.

Nu-Swift says it remains policy to seek to invest in other service-related businesses.

Rolls to form leasing venture with Fokker

Fokker, the Dutch aircraft maker, yesterday announced it would be forming a joint venture company with Rolls-Royce and Partners Finance Limited (RRPF), which leases and finances Rolls-Royce products.

The company's principal activities will include the leasing, trading and financing of

Fokker aircraft, most of which are powered by Rolls-Royce turbo fan engines.

Fokker and RRPF finally reached agreement to form the joint venture company through a 50 per cent participation by RRPF in Aircraft Financing & Trading (AFT), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Fokker.

Birse rises 21% at half time

By Philip Pangalos

Pre-tax profits at Birse Group, the construction and civil engineering company which came to the market last September, increased 21 per cent to £5.23 million in the six months to end-October.

Turnover grew 16 per cent to £105.1 million, with construction advancing 20 per cent and accounting for £98.4 million of the total.

Earnings per share rise from 5.8p to 6.8p and there is an interim dividend of 0.25p.

Mr Peter Birse, chairman, said the building market has slowed in the South of England but is buoyant in the Midlands and North. Business available in civil engineering has increased.

The company has been more active in plant hire, which accounts for 25 per cent of profits. A depot has been commissioned in Aberdeen to serve the offshore industry in the North Sea.

Birse Homes made a small first-half loss and is "unlikely to return to profitability in the near future." Birse Communications, started a year ago, continued to incur losses in the first half, at about £200,000, although it is now trading profitably and should show a profit by next year.

Analysts expect full-year pre-tax profits of £13.5 million. The shares held at 130p.

Why poll day is a vote loser

Up to one million people will be caught by anomalies in poll tax, operative in seven weeks time. The courts may be able to help, but most cannot afford legal redress.

Find out why tenants, divorcees, married women, holiday cottage owners, pensioners and parents are concerned

THE TIMES
ON SATURDAY
IN COLOUR

about the new tax in Family Money tomorrow.

The seven pages of personal finance news and information will also look at the success of new green investments, the new crop of investment trusts and the value of unlisted funds.

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Directors reject chance of Really Useful stake

By Martin Waller

The three executive directors of Mr Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group have rejected the chance to take an equity stake in the company once it is taken private and are in discussions with the composer about their future with the group.

Mr John Whitney, former director general of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, Miss Biddy Hayward, who runs the Palace Theatre, and Mr Keith Turner, are thought likely to remain with RUG in the end, however.

But as the plans for the buy-out progressed, they rejected an arrangement to buy 1 per cent of the successor company between them and earn up to another 5 per cent over a

period of years, depending on future profits.

No one at the buyout team was giving a reason last night for their change of heart, which occurred about a month ago. Mr Lloyd Webber this week announced a 233p offer for the rest of the company he does not own, revealing that he spoke for 52.5 per cent through his Newco vehicle.

The row over the apparent *fait accompli* he had handed the minority shareholders continued yesterday. Schroders, the merchant bank which brought RUG to the market, is using Wertheim, its 50 per cent-owned New York associate, to produce an independent valuation of the business and copyrights it controls and is not going to advise shareholders on

whether to accept until this is available.

Lord Gowrie, the former Arts Minister who is non-executive chairman at RUG, said: "It's a very difficult thing to value - you are not only valuing the properties, you also have to value Mr Lloyd Webber's continuing involvement in them."

"The only course of action you have is that you can recommend that shareholders don't accept the price and you can make a comment on what you feel about the price."

Mr Lloyd Webber is in a commanding position, however. The group's main income stream, accounting for more than 90 per cent of profits, is the performances of *Cats*, *Aspects of Love*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Starlight*

Express and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. Under his contract, which expires in January 1993, Mr Lloyd Webber can forbid further performances of the works, turning off much of the profits at source. He can also, should dissenting shareholders decide to stay in, block any future dividends.

The problem of valuing RUG was the main reason for the City's disenchantment with it. Firm profits forecasts are hard to come by, but for the current year the best bet is about £8 million-plus pre-tax, (£7.4 million). Earnings per share, should show a minimal increase because the tax charge was kept low last year. The bid, therefore, offers a prospective exit multiple of just under 15 times.

Ferranti sells half of sonar business

By Angela Mackay

Ferranti International, the defence and electronics company, has continued its programme of asset disposals by announcing the sale of half of its sonar systems business to Thomson-CSF, the French group, for £32 million.

Sir Derek Alun-Jones, Ferranti's chairman and chief executive, and Mr Bill Broekhuizen, the head of Ferranti Computer Systems, signed the deal - which is believed to include an option on the remaining 50 per cent - in Paris on Wednesday.

The sonar business, with annual sales of £40 million, will be moved off from the computer systems division and jointly managed. However, a new chief executive will be drawn from Ferranti.

Thomson had been interested in purchasing Ferranti's defence systems but GEC's "knockout" offer of £310 million forced the French to examine the rest of the Ferranti group more closely.

Thomson had hoped to own the majority stake in a sonar joint venture but Ferranti refused to negotiate on that basis. The joint venture, based in Cheshire Heath, near Manchester, will be mostly separate from Thomson's defence sonar operation, *Sintra*.

Analysts said the price paid, which represented 21 times historic earnings, was a good deal for Ferranti.

The company started selling assets after discovering a £215 "hole" in its assets, allegedly caused by fraudulent defence contracts.

A spokesman for Ferranti said the business needed the support of a big partner to provide the industrial strength to keep winning contracts.

Ferranti won a £20 million order last week to supply 10 sonar systems to the Royal Navy. After the joint venture is completed, just under 50 per cent of Ferranti's sales will come from defence.

Ferranti Computer Systems will primarily be a civil business, specialising in software integration.

Ferranti Industrial Electronics contains the communications businesses, including *Zonephone*.

Ferranti decided this week to scrap a £187 million rights issue after the signing of the GEC contract. However, it has arranged a £62.38 million standby facility in case insufficient asset sales are made by the end of March.

COMMENT

Tide may have turned for British Telecom

The habit of lambasting British Telecom dies hard. Leading investment managers are as well aware as politicians and the rest of the public of its long-standing shortcomings in the public and private sectors. But the image is gradually changing - through genuine performance as well as clever advertising - and international investors are dragging their City brethren into taking a new look at a strong, if unloved, group.

Some of this rethink is due to the fall from grace of the fair weather, high-growth companies as the economy turns sour. A general business recession would certainly hit BT's domestic business, but the damage would be relatively slight. Underlying volume growth in the core business has been running at 9 per cent during the past 12 months and may drop only a point in 1990. There are also signs that, after making good earlier performance disasters, BT may be able to contain costs sufficiently to live within its price regime and convert volume growth into earnings.

After stripping out the pension contributions holiday, staff costs rose about 8 per cent in the third quarter against 10 per cent for the first nine months as a whole and the ragbag of "other" operating costs is also coming under control. This is admittedly somewhat easier in times of relatively high inflation but the trend is encouraging.

The £50 million quarterly pension saving, which should last another two and a half years, more than pays for the investment in McCaw, which should start to produce real and rising profits during the next three or four years. Cellnet, though behind Vodafone, is also delivering useful growth on top of the core business.

At the same time, BT is beginning to feel sufficiently confident to prune some of its early defensive diversifications: into manufacturing via Mitel and possibly cable operations as well. This makes sense for a business which is absorbing cash in its main telecommunications businesses.

Despite management protestations, however, it looks too early for BT to argue convincingly that it is no longer a dominant competitor and should therefore not be held back to allow others in. This will undoubtedly hurt it in the domestic market. That is part of the case for BT's transatlantic adventure.

After their recent recovery, the shares still sell at little more than 10 times prospective earnings with a prospective yield of about 5.25 per cent. This is modest by international standards. The comparisons include Cable and Wireless, which has a deservedly better image but must at some time or other suffer in comparison with BT from the Hong Kong connection. BT has not yet proved it is a new active rather than reactive animal. But the tide may have turned.

Old Lady still in the dark

Although it only gives the Government a "modest" mark for progress on fighting inflation, the Old Lady's autumn term report does acknowledge that a 15 per cent base rate has had the desired effect on the onerous consumer, subduing household expenditure nicely, especially in the housing-related sectors. But not everyone, it seems, is as ready to learn. Either that, or the numbers are failing to tell the true story.

In its latest *Quarterly Bulletin*, the Bank of England reveals that it is still somewhat in the dark as to the pattern of corporate spending. After a prolonged dose of the Chancellor's high-interest rate medicine, investment would appear to have slowed, while there seems to have been a substantial accumulation of stocks since mid-1988. Part of this may be run down this year, depressing demand still further. But Threadneedle Street is not alarmed, believing inflation poses more of a threat than recession.

Anyway, there is a substantial school of thought which thinks the "do-stocking avalanche" scenario is a thing of the past in a British corporate sector much leaner and meaner than it used to be. Indeed, the survey notes it is "not obvious" that stockbuilding

has occurred on the scale suggested by recorded figures. But wisely the Bank suggests that any "involuntary" accumulation due to the economy slowing, is likely to be unwound in the next few quarters.

Understandably, capital expenditure is not expected to grow as strongly as last year, but fierce cuts, such as those seen in 1980, are considered unlikely, despite the company sector's £6.5 billion financial deficit. Long-term big spenders - Eurotunnel, the water and power industries - should provide the necessary underpinning to prevent any serious collapse.

For all the surging financial deficit, profitability remained high last year. Profits fell modestly in the third quarter, but the Bank observes that it was still high by historical standards. Dividends have shown strong overall growth, if somewhat erratic. The Bank sees the strong third quarter reflecting underlying profitability, or, in part, defensive moves in a period of exceptionally high takeover activity, which boosted corporate borrowing to about £14 billion. With the takeover heat off last quarter, the picture might have become clearer.

Novalal joining the USM forest



Looking for growth: Richard Wallis, chief executive of Novalal, which specialises in cloning of hardwood trees, yesterday

Novalal, a start-up venture whose expertise is mass cloning of hardwood trees, is coming to the USM after a placing with City institutions of 5 million shares at 100p each to raise a net £4.61 million (Colin Campbell writes).

The company will use £200,000 of the proceeds to reimburse certain promoters for pre-formation expenses, £1.4 million for the acquisition and

equipping of premises in Havering, Suffolk, and £1.2 million in equipping premises at its Essex estate.

A further £400,000 may be spent in exercising an option over land, leaving the balance of £1.4 million for working capital requirements.

In addition to the mass production of trees, Novalal intends exploiting other life science technologies - including fine chemicals for the

brewing and pharmaceutical industries.

Since a number of vital medicines can be obtained from plant cells, Novalal hopes to use its expertise to produce such agents and thus save otherwise rare plants and trees from destruction.

In the first full year of trading to July 31, 1991, the company projects pre-tax profits of £2.85 million on a turnover of £4.66 million. At

the placing price, this would translate into a prospective price earnings ratio of 9.7 times.

Initially, the board proposes retaining profits for use as working capital.

Mr Richard Wallis, chief executive, says Novalal will initially concentrate its activities in Britain though may set up additional propagation units in other countries closer to the eventual site of planting.

BOC 'on target' with 7% increase to £81.5m

BOC, the industrial gases and health care group, produced a 7 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £81.5 million in the three months to December. Sales 16 per cent up at £596 million. A slight fall in the tax charge meant fully diluted earnings per share were 9 per cent higher at 11.3p.

Mr Richard Giordano, chairman and chief executive, said this result was in line with expectations for the quarter and consistent with BOC's plans for the year as a whole.

The gases businesses had a strong first quarter, with operating profits 11 per cent up at £74.5 million. Although growth in sales tonnage was only 3 per cent in Europe, the rise was 13 per cent in Japan and 14 per cent in Taiwan.

In health care, operating profits were 7 per cent up at £20.2 million. BOC said this increase was modest, but it was confident profits would improve further over the rest of the year.

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Coloroll sells Drew to management for £16m

Coloroll, the troubled home furnishings group, has sold Alexander Drew to its management in a £16.5 million buyout, which is expected to announce its refinancing next week, has £150 million of debt.

Alexander Drew, based in Rochdale, converts greycloth into printed furnishing fabrics. The business has been managed as an autonomous division within Coloroll and made profits of £2.47 million for March 1989. It has

assets of around £5.1 million. The buyout is made up of £14.9 million in cash and £1.6 million of finance leases. Morgan Grenfell Development Capital arranged the deal.

Coloroll plans to raise about £80 million in its refinancing. Contrary to speculation, Mr John Ashcroft is expected to take a firmer grip on the reins and remain chief executive. Coloroll is expected to raise more money by selling off other divisions in the next few weeks.

'Pocket money' for Spaniard

Nigel Howe, popularity known in the stock market as "The Spaniard", and made redundant from his job as a general equity salesman at Citicorp Sringemour Vickers, has turned his back on several near-six figure job offers and accepted a salary of £30,000 a year - pocket money by recent City standards - to work for Peel Hunt. It means that Howe will be reunited with old Etonian Charlie Peel, who founded the small agency firm last year. "He worked for me at Fieldings, in his pre-CSV days," says Peel, who was once the managing partner at the broker Fieldings Newson Smith. Of Howe's lowly salary, Peel reveals that it is company policy to pay everyone a flat rate of £30,000 - "Including me," he says - plus BUPA and a profits-related bonus, according to seniority. "Half our profits go into a pool to be divided among staff and the other half goes to our shareholders," says Peel. The ex-Fieldings duo will be joined by a trio in April when Chris Hartley, who retired from the City to live in Wyoming, in the US, makes his come back by joining Peel Hunt. "It will bring us up to 13 in total," says Peel. "We are expanding but I doubt we'll be more than 15 or 16 by the end of this year."

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

It's chairman Twiggy

Larger than life Terry "Twiggy" Buckland, head trader at Phillips & Drew Fund Management, is clearly never going to live down his last luncheon at Warburg Securities. As revealed in the *City Diary*, the lanky 6ft 7ins, 16½stones ("Or 17 and a bit," he grudgingly admits) stockbroker sat on a valuable antique chair in the private

dining room there last month, and broke it. Invited by food-happy Warburg, he turned up with a seat of his own under his arm - a shooting stick. "I thought they might have only put out nine seats for 10 guests," he tells me. "But they double-bluffed me - they had 16 chairs instead and told me to take my pick."

roads, cars cannot hope to clock up more than 11 mph and the authorities are contemplating the importation of double-decker buses from London...

Fools gold

In contrast to all the usual financial waffle that such company reports often contain, there is a simple, if not brutal, item in the most recent set of accounts from Falcon Mines, the Zimbabwean gold miner. In just four lines the accounts reveal how the company distributed its wealth. "To employees £28.36 million; to Government £270,000; to lenders of capital £2505,000; to shareholders - nil."

Banking is full of surprises. Barclays found that the business personality most favoured in a survey of 20,000 teenage account-holders was Robert Maxwell.

Ideals up a gum tree

Novalal, the tree-clone group, is coming to the USM with its principles up a gum tree - to use an expression. For its fine glossy placing document is not, tree lovers will be horrified to learn, on recycled paper. "Sorry about that," says chief executive Richard Wallis. "We had trouble with the printers, and we couldn't get the recycled paper in time." He then hastily added, "Our stationery will, however, use recycled paper." Meanwhile Tim Steer, smaller companies analyst at James Capel, and one of the team which has just published the firm's second *Green Book* - a guide to the 30 companies most likely to benefit from changes in environmental legislation - reveals that the publication is at the forefront of green trends. "We checked with the printer to make sure that it was being printed on recycled paper and were told that it was only 30 per cent recycled paper - and 70 per cent recycled furniture. But unfortunately their supplier ran out before our turn came and we ended up with 100 per cent recycled paper after all." Perhaps this might help solve Lowndes Queensway's problems.

Sign of the times... On a notice board for use by its customers, in the Safeway supermarket in Pickering, North Yorkshire, one poster reads: "For sale: Outline of the history of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Offers. Genuine reason for sale."

Carol Leonard

"I have been lucky enough to drive most of the world's fastest sports cars, and none of them have the same overall balance of speed, comfort and refinement that this new 300ZX exhibits" Ian Kush, *World Sports Cars*

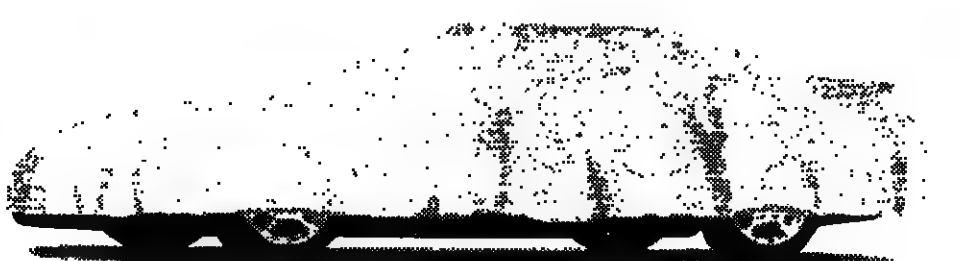
The new 300ZX will arrive in the UK this spring.

It has been described by leading motoring journalists as one of the world's finest sports cars.

The 300ZX will be on display at special all-day previews around the country, starting with the venues listed below.

Viewing can take place up to 9.30 p.m.

We invite you to examine the new thoroughbred that will set the standards for supercars in the nineties.



10th/11th February
LONDON CENTRAL
AFG CAMDEN
85 Camden Road
Tel: 01-486 6067

12th/13th February
LONDON NORTH WEST
AFG COLINDALE
The Hyde, Edgware Road
Tel: 01-200 8555

14th/15th February
LONDON SOUTH WEST
COLLIERS WOOD GARAGE LTD
3-11 High Street, Colliers Wood
Tel: 01-543 4111

16th/17th February
LONDON SOUTH EAST
ANCASTER GARAGES
61 Croydon Road, Penge
Tel: 01-778 8981

18th/19th February
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
AFG HIGH WYCOMBE
330-336 London Road
Tel: 0494 463737

20th/21st February
MIDDLESEX
HERDS OF SOUTHALL
Mentick Road
Tel: 01-574 6768

NISSAN
know how.
NISSAN UK LIMITED, WORTHING, SUSSEX

Seoul sufferers
Before you complain, yet again, about the congestion of London's roads and Tube

Early advance for Dow

TOKYO

HONG KONG

The advance, which marked the market's best performance in seven weeks, came on a turnover of HK\$1.97 billion (£149 million), up from Wednesday's HK\$1.1 billion

Montagu to advise



Stephens: reducing losses

To try to reduce the Project Group's losses, ECGD plans to abandon its premium schedules for underwriting medium- and long-term sovereign risk and charge exporters on an individual basis and

Michael Clark[illegible]

WORLD MARKET INDICES		LONDON TRADED OPTIONS	
DATE	INDEX	DATE	INDEX
1997-01-01	10000	1997-01-01	10000
1997-01-02	10005	1997-01-02	10005
1997-01-03	10010	1997-01-03	10010
1997-01-04	10015	1997-01-04	10015
1997-01-05	10020	1997-01-05	10020
1997-01-06	10025	1997-01-06	10025
1997-01-07	10030	1997-01-07	10030
1997-01-08	10035	1997-01-08	10035
1997-01-09	10040	1997-01-09	10040
1997-01-10	10045	1997-01-10	10045
1997-01-11	10050	1997-01-11	10050
1997-01-12	10055	1997-01-12	10055
1997-01-13	10060	1997-01-13	10060
1997-01-14	10065	1997-01-14	10065
1997-01-15	10070	1997-01-15	10070
1997-01-16	10075	1997-01-16	10075
1997-01-17	10080	1997-01-17	10080
1997-01-18	10085	1997-01-18	10085
1997-01-19	10090	1997-01-19	10090
1997-01-20	10095	1997-01-20	10095
1997-01-21	10100	1997-01-21	10100
1997-01-22	10105	1997-01-22	10105
1997-01-23	10110	1997-01-23	10110
1997-01-24	10115	1997-01-24	10115
1997-01-25	10120	1997-01-25	10120
1997-01-26	10125	1997-01-26	10125
1997-01-27	10130	1997-01-27	10130
1997-01-28	10135	1997-01-28	10135
1997-01-29	10140	1997-01-29	10140
1997-01-30	10145	1997-01-30	10145
1997-01-31	10150	1997-01-31	10150
1997-02-01	10155	1997-02-01	10155
1997-02-02	10160	1997-02-02	10160
1997-02-03	10165	1997-02-03	10165
1997-02-04	10170	1997-02-04	10170
1997-02-05	10175	1997-02-05	10175
1997-02-06	10180	1997-02-06	10180
1997-02-07	10185	1997-02-07	10185
1997-02-08	10190	1997-02-08	10190
1997-02-09	10195	1997-02-09	10195
1997-02-10	10200	1997-02-10	10200
1997-02-11	10205	1997-02-11	10205
1997-02-12	10210	1997-02-12	10210
1997-02-13	10215	1997-02-13	10215
1997-02-14	10220	1997-02-14	10220
1997-02-15	10225	1997-02-15	10225
1997-02-16	10230	1997-02-16	10230
1997-02-17	10235	1997-02-17	10235
1997-02-18	10240	1997-02-18	10240
1997-02-19	10245	1997-02-19	10245
1997-02-20	10250	1997-02-20	10250
1997-02-21	10255	1997-02-21	10255
1997-02-22	10260	1997-02-22	10260
1997-02-23	10265	1997-02-23	10265
1997-02-24	10270	1997-02-24	10270
1997-02-25	10275	1997-02-25	10275
1997-02-26	10280	1997-02-26	10280
1997-02-27	10285	1997-02-27	10285
1997-02-28	10290	1997-02-28	10290
1997-02-29	10295	1997-02-29	10295
1997-03-01	10300	1997-03-01	10300
1997-03-02	10305	1997-03-02	10305
1997-03-03	10310	1997-03-03	10310
1997-03-04	10315	1997-03-04	10315
1997-03-05	10320	1997-03-05	10320
1997-03-06	10325	1997-03-06	

THIRD QUARTER RESULTS

	Third quarter 3 months ended		Cumulative 9 months ended	
	31 December (unaudited) 1989 £m	1988 £m	31 December (unaudited) 1989 £m	1988 £m
Turnover	3,083	2,790	9,037	8,201
Operating profit	827	703	2,360	2,104
Profit before tax	695	623	2,008	1,862
Profit after tax	464	402	1,331	1,201
Earnings per share	7.6p	6.6p	21.7p	19.8p

Third quarter highlights

- Turnover up 10.5%, earnings per share up 14.8%.
- Demand for telecommunication services holds up well despite general slowdown in the UK economy.
- Capital expenditure to 31 December at record levels.
- Global communication capability enhanced through the acquisition of Tymnet, a world leader in managed data network services.
- Emphasis remains on improving quality of customer service, increasing operational efficiency and achieving profitable growth for shareholders.

If you have any queries as an investor, please call 0345 040505. For daily information on the British Telecom share price and matters of interest to shareholders generally, please call 0 435 087077. You may telephone these numbers from anywhere in the UK for the price of a local call.

British Telecommunications plc, 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ.

British TELECOM
It's you we answer to

THE TIMES
STOCK
WATCH
0898 141 141

- The Stockwatch service gives readers of *The Times* instant telephone access to the prices of more than 13,000 shares, unit trusts and bonds.
- The information can be obtained on the following telephone numbers:
- Stock market comment: The general situation can be obtained by ringing 0898 121220.
- Company news: Items relating to company news are on 0898 121211.
- The prices of shares that are actively trading may be obtained on 0898 121225.
- Calls are charged at a rate of 38p per minute during peak times. During standard times, they are charged at 25p per minute. All are inclusive of VAT.

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cher (A) N/P	13 + 1	
ortfolk (A) N/P	26 + 3	
ntau N/P	14	
ntau Mining N/P	87 + 4	

TRADITIONAL OPTIONS

First Dealings	Last Dealings	Last Declaration	For Settlement
February 5	February 19	May 10	May 21

All options were taken out on: 8/2/90 Next, Wiltco, Control Securities, Stanley Miller, Pacific Resources, Colcraft, Allied Irish Banks, Aviva, Priest Mariani.

www.Principal-Mortgage.com

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

	Cable					Radio					Cable					Radio				
	Station	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Station	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Station	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Station	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Adm Lines	420	82	80	80	77	18	P & O	800	867	874	11	57	105	105	105					
(435)	820	81	79	80	80	82	80	800	1059	928	77	73	73	73	11					
AFRICA	820	71	16	28	80	80	80	800	273	234	13	13	13	13	13					
(110)	120	61	11	11	11	17	19	800	230	10	18	18	18	18	18					
(110)	130	61	4	7	11	17	19	800	240	3	18	18	18	18	18					
Asia	1000	60	80	102	80	87	34	37	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	1100	70	80	102	80	87	34	37	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	1100	70	80	102	80	87	34	37	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Boats	280	28	34	37	40	5	10	12	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(274)	380	28	34	37	40	5	10	12	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(274)	380	28	34	37	40	5	10	12	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Br. Air	800	75	80	80	80	7	7	8	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	820	75	80	80	80	7	7	8	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	820	75	80	80	80	7	7	8	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Br. Com.	70	10	15	15	15	11	15	15	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(771)	80	6	6	6	6	14	16	16	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(771)	80	6	6	6	6	14	16	16	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(771)	80	6	6	6	6	14	16	16	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Canada	300	44	33	33	33	8	8	8	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	330	33	33	33	33	8	8	8	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	330	33	33	33	33	8	8	8	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Ch. Steel	135	31	31	31	31	4	4	4	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(136)	145	31	31	31	31	4	4	4	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(136)	145	31	31	31	31	4	4	4	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
C. & W.	800	80	80	80	80	13	13	13	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(758)	820	80	80	80	80	13	13	13	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(758)	820	80	80	80	80	13	13	13	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Com. Union	800	80	80	80	80	13	13	13	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(489)	820	81	79	80	80	82	80	800	1059	928	77	73	73	73	11					
(489)	820	81	79	80	80	82	80	800	1059	928	77	73	73	73	11					
(489)	820	81	79	80	80	82	80	800	1059	928	77	73	73	73	11					
Coastal	320	67	74	74	74	23	25	27	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(705)	360	42	41	41	41	58	58	58	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(705)	360	42	41	41	41	58	58	58	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(705)	360	42	41	41	41	58	58	58	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Grand Med.	380	27	42	42	42	13	14	14	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(484)	420	27	42	42	42	13	14	14	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(484)	420	27	42	42	42	13	14	14	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(484)	420	27	42	42	42	13	14	14	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
Gr. Steel	370	46	17	24	24	38	38	38	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	420	46	17	24	24	38	38	38	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	420	46	17	24	24	38	38	38	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(110)	420	46	17	24	24	38	38	38	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
H. (100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
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(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18					
(100)	830	14	14	14	14	54	55	52	800	240	3	18	18	18	18			</		

LAST year, companies from the European Community spent over £2.5 billion buying up their British counterparts. THIS year they can be expected to spend at least the same again.

THE truth is, 1992 actually began in 1985, when the European heads of government agreed to the programme which would lead to a Single Market. SINCE then, stories of major European investment have been a regular feature of our business pages.

IF THE SINGLE MARKET DOESN'T HAPPEN UNTIL 1992, HAS YOUR COMPETITION PULLED

A FAST ONE?

A FRENCH company buys a large stake in two British companies which, together, undertake 11% of all our funerals.

A SPANISH company wins the contract to run the refuse service in Brighton.

A GERMAN company launches its super-market concept in the UK, selling food straight from the packing cartons.

INDEED, all kinds of British businesses in areas as different as insurance from tomato ketchup, are now being shaken up by new European owners.

(OF course, our sharpest brains are giving many companies the same treatment over there.)

BUT the threat, or rather the opportunity, is perhaps best described by the recent story

of a French manufacturer of industrial water purifiers.

NOT for him the sophistication of a computerised targeting of his market.

NOT for him a franchising arrangement, a distribution deal or a merger.

HE just got on a plane, his briefcase bulging with brochures.

HE flew to England, hailed a taxi and asked the driver to take him to any water-using business he could think of.

THE Frenchman is now doing buoyant

business here in Britain.

AT the expense, of course, of local suppliers.

(Perhaps they were still waiting for 1992 to come along?)

CLEARLY there is no time to lose. You have to pull out all the stops now.

STOP and think where you should be going in the new business environment.

STOP and talk to your accountant, bank manager or your solicitor.

STOP by your Trade Association, Chamber of Commerce or your local business club. (Have you joined one?)

EACH may have invaluable advice. And if you don't know where to start, please ring the DTI Hotline on 01-200 1992, or your local DTI office.

THEY can direct you to expert advice and provide you with news of the latest developments from their Single Market information service.

THE most important development is that you're now part of the largest free market in the world.

SET up your stall.



THE SINGLE MARKET IS HERE NOW. WHERE ARE YOU?

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Religion	Ethnicity	Marital Status	Occupation	Education	Income	Assets	Liabilities	Net Worth
1												
2												
3												
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FOREIGN EXCHANGES

1. 姓名: 王德明
 2. 性别: 男
 3. 年龄: 45
 4. 籍贯: 山东烟台
 5. 民族: 汉族
 6. 职业: 教师
 7. 学历: 本科
 8. 婚姻状况: 已婚
 9. 子女情况: 一子一女
 10. 健康状况: 良好
 11. 兴趣爱好: 读书、运动
 12. 自我评价: 为人正直, 责任心强

COMMODITIES

SAWS DISCOUNT M.P.

١٥٥ من الأصل

Portfolio

PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money stated. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Cash at 100
1	Swire Pacific 'A'	Industrials S-Z	100
2	Esom	Draperies, Stores	100
3	Enterprise (as)	Oil/Gas	100
4	Sea TV	Leisure	100
5	Baroness (as)	Transport	100
6	Waco	Food	100
7	Blue Circle (as)	Building Roads	100
8	Security Serv	Industrials S-Z	100
9	Lowes Group	Food, Print, Adv	100
10	Evode	Chemicals, Plus	100
11	Jardine Math	Industrials E-K	100
12	Read Ltd (as)	Newspapers, Pub	100
13	St. Telecons (as)	Electronics	100
14	ARL (as)	Property	100
15	MEPC (as)	Oil/Gas	100
16	LASMO (as)	Oil/Gas	100
17	Dunelm	Property	100
18	Smiths Beech (as)	Industrials S-Z	100
19	Boots (as)	Industrials A-D	100
20	Electronics	Electronics	100
21	Securguard	Industrials S-Z	100
22	Logica	Electronics	100
23	Guthrie (as)	Breweries	100
24	Bodycote	Industrials A-D	100
25	ICC (as)	Electronics	100
26	Klein-Eze	Industrials E-K	100
27	Parsons (as)	Newspapers, Pub	100
28	Sainsbury J (as)	Food	100
29	Travis Perkins	Building Roads	100
30	SET (as)	Industrials A-D	100
31	BPB Ind (as)	Building Roads	100
32	ERF	Motors, Aircraft	100
33	Williams Hodge (as)	Industrials S-Z	100
34	Brith	Building Roads	100
35	Cambridge Elec	Electronics	100
36	American	Chemicals, Plus	100
37	Southend Prop	Property	100
38	Geycoat	Property	100
39	Kanal Telecom (as)	Electronics	100
40	Bentley (as)	Oil/Gas	100
41	Max West (as)	Banks, Discount	100
42	Smith WH 'A' (as)	Drugs, Stores	100
43	BAT (as)	Drugs, Stores	100
44	Hambros	Banks, Discount	100

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Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend						
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £4,000 in tomorrow's newspaper.						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN

BRITISH FUNDS

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

SHORTS (Under Five Years)

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

UNDATED

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

INDEX-LINKED

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

BANKS, DISCOUNT HP

1989/90	High	Low	Price	Change	%	P/E

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

Confident rally

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began January 29. Dealings end today. Settlement day February 12. Settlement day February 19.

Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are yielded on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, values and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (as) denotes Alpha Stocks. (VOLUMES: PAGE 25)

BREWERIES

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

BUILDING, ROADS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

DRAPERY, STORES

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

ELECTRICALS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

FINANCE, LAND

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

FOODS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

HOTELS, CATERERS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

INDUSTRIALS A-D

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

S-Z

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

INSURANCE

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

LEISURE

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

MINING

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

MOTORS, AIRCRAFT

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

NEWSPAPERS, PUBLISHERS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

OIL, GAS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

OVERSEAS TRADERS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

PAPER, PRINT, ADVERTISING

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

PROPERTY

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

SHOES, LEATHER

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TEXTILES

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TOBACCOS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TRANSPORT

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

WATER

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

Portfolio

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OVERSEAS TRADERS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

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1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

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1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

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1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TEXTILES

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TOBACCOS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TRANSPORT

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

WATER

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

© Ex dividend a Ex all b Forecast dividend c Inventory payment passed d Price at suspension g Dividend and field include a special payment h Pre-emptive Rights i Forecast earnings o Ex other r Ex rights s Ex corp or share split t Tax-free No significant data

Battle of the supergiants

In MacLaurin, chairman of Tesco, remarked not long ago: "I have always said there is room for only three majors in the industry. The next five years will knock two out of this game."

It is turning out to be a prophetic observation from the man who just over a decade ago managed, by one vote, to get the Tesco board's agreement to move away from its "pile it high, sell it cheap" beginnings and start to out-Sainsbury Lord Sainsbury's previously unassailable empire, leader of the pack in Britain's £40 billion grocery trade.

At the end of last year not much separated the two leading contenders. Mintel, specialist researchers, estimated that of all food sales Sainsbury accounted for an 11.9 per cent market share while Tesco held 11.5 per cent. The Mintel league table then listed Gateway at number three with 9 per cent, Leeds-based Asda at 6.1 per cent, Argyl's Safeway at 5 per cent and Marks & Spencer at 4.6 per cent.

But already Asda is stepping ahead of Gateway and more changes are coming. Two years ago, Argyl bought the British Safeway stores from its United States parent and now has more than 300 Safeway outlets, partly through a programme of new store development, but also by converting some bigger Presto outlets to the Safeway format. The Presto fascia stays on some stores and Argyl's discount chain, Lo-Cost, remains a separate operation.

Argyl chairman and chief executive Alistair Grant estimates that the Safeway acquisition has transformed Argyl from a grocery chain a third the size of Sainsbury and Tesco into one two-thirds their size. Argyl has also forged links with Asda of Holland and Casino de France and the imminent single European market looks likely to bring more such developments within the trade.

Kwik Save, the discount chain with special strength in the north of England, accounts for 2.2 per cent of the grocery market, according to Mintel. Waitrose, the John Lewis Partnership chain which has always been adventurously

In the tough world of food retailing, big is not just beautiful, it is the best way to stay in business.
Derek Harris
looks at some of the major players

up-market where better profit margins are to be had, is attributed with 1.9 per cent market share, with Yorkshire-based William Morrison at 1.5 per cent. Iceland, is credited with 1.5 per cent market share, following its takeover of Bejam.

Taking in some other multiples means the big chains now take 60 per cent of all grocery sales. But that does not take account of the Co-operative movement, which still consists of some 80 different retail societies, thus lacking some cohesion, but taken together they account for 11.2 per cent of the grocery market. That effectively makes it the third force in grocery retailing, although its market share is continuing to shrink, albeit with signs that the process is slowing.

The Isocoles consortium took over the decidedly diffuse Gateway empire last year in a buy-in, led by David Smith, and has just sold off to Asda 61 of its bigger stores for £705 million. This is lifting Asda, the target of much takeover speculation, as its profits made a poorer showing, into the number three position in the market share league, pushing Gateway down a peg.

Safeway is expected to step ahead of Gateway as more of the Presto stores are converted to the Safeway format. At the same time,

M & S, trading on its quality image, has been so successful in selling food that it is now setting up outlets which are primarily food orientated with clothing and other traditional M & S goods as adjuncts rather than the other way round as in the main body of its stores.

Battle could be joined with M & S jostling into the mainstream of grocery multiples with a positioning towards the up-market end of the spectrum.

M & S was late in moving out of city and town centres, but the first of several edge-of-town ventures planned with Tesco is open in Hertfordshire, a few miles from the Tesco headquarters at Chesham. Tesco has a superstore there while the M & S store includes a substantial 17,000 sq ft of food retailing.

A new M & S development in Glasgow will put a 25,000 sq ft food store alongside an existing Asda superstore. Tesco remains the biggest operator of superstores with 160 such outlets and has started a £1 billion, three-year building programme which should add another 60 such stores.

Asda, once it has converted the Gateway stores and with its own programme of development bringing more Asda superstores into operation, should pass the 200 mark by 1991.

Sainsbury has 116 superstores, taking the usual benchmark of a store of 25,000 sq ft or more of selling space. But it has some stores just below the benchmark which have many of the hallmarks of the superstore because Sainsbury, like Safeway, carries comparatively little in the way of non-food lines. Sainsbury is opening more than 20 superstores a year, the main thrust being north and west from its heartland of the South East. Its most northerly store, just opened, is in Whitby Bay on the North East coast.

Clearly competition will continue to mount in the grocery trade, with more emphasis currently on price, which will make it tougher to keep up profit margins. It means the MacLaurin forecast is more likely to come true.



One of Safeway's pilot carrier bag banks tapping the contents of people's pantries: if trials are successful, the idea will be extended nationwide

Green grow the grocers

For the past couple of weeks, customers at five selected Safeway stores have had a new facility on offer: carrier bag banks.

Realising that most shoppers have a small, but growing, mountain of plastic carriers in their pantries (many trophies of previous supermarket visits), the company has launched a trial scheme to collect and recycle the bags. If the trial is successful, the banks will be installed nationwide.

The project is just one of dozens of "green schemes" being run by the supermarket chains. All the big retailers — Asda, the Co-op, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury, Safeway — are vying for "green" points. Most have a senior manager or director responsible for green issues and there is intense competition to top the league table in *The Green Consumer's Supermarket Shopping Guide*, John Elington and Julia Hall's follow-up to their best-selling *The Green Consumer Guide* (Collins, £4.99 each). Safeway and Tesco head the list with five stars apiece.

Tony Combes, Safeway's director for environment, who insists that his company was green long

before it became fashionable (it started recycling its cardboard and giving away "tree-saver" brown recycled paper bags as long ago as 1971), says its commitment to the environment is genuine.

"Our buyers don't have a job description which says 'Save the world' and try to make a profit at the same time", but we do encourage them, for example, to keep in touch with Friends of the Earth and pressure organizations," he says.

The supermarkets' green initiatives fall into three categories:

• **Products.** A list of environmentally benign products, many of them own-label, produced under the supermarket's own name, is available. In some shops, complete ranges of goods have green images.

• **Customers.** The earliest attempts at helping customers to recycle waste were things like bottle banks for the relatively easily-recycled glass bottles.

Helping customers recycle plastic containers has been more difficult because of the variety of plastics used in retailing. But Tesco and Sainsbury have joined forces to set up a trial collection scheme in the North-West for mixed plastics.

Under the scheme, EVC, a joint venture company belonging to ICI and the Italian company Enimont, will evaluate the type and volume of plastics collected so it can assess the type of equipment needed to start commercial recycling.

• **Stores.** Retailers are trying to make stores and distribution centres more environment-friendly. There is a move, for example, away from the use of CFC gases, which damage the ozone layer, in refrigeration. Safeway is using ammonia gas coolants at its new Scottish distribution centre in Strathclyde and plans environment-friendly refrigeration in all new stores.

Organizations such as Friends

of the Earth welcome the initiatives taken by the supermarkets, but do not go overboard in their praise. Pippa Hyam, recycling information officer for Friends of the Earth, says that none of them has yet been nearly radical enough.

"Though there are lots of good initiatives, there's nothing so dramatic that any one supermarket chain stands out from the others," she says.

Environmentalists would like the supermarkets' moves seriously, for example, they sold all their fruit and vegetables in recycled paper bags instead of polystyrene trays and plastic wrapping, or if they reverted to the old-fashioned refill and deposit system on bottles for their own-brand drinks.

Hyam adds: "Of course, they'd have to alter their distribution system by introducing localized filling depots because returning empty bottles to one centralized point over great distances is clearly uneconomic. But it would enormously cut down the amount of waste that's produced from drinks packaging."

Malcolm Brown

Despite low earnings, manufacturers attract high prices from bidders

Fancy prices are paid in food manufacturing, not so much for the goods on the supermarket shelves as for the companies that produce them.

There have been more than 400 takeovers in western Europe in this sector in the past two years, including Nestlé's £2.5 billion hard-fought acquisition of Rowntree, the chocolate maker.

Bidders have been prepared to pay far more than the stock market valuation of their prey — 20 or even 30 times annual earnings in a sector where shares generally trade at around 10 times earnings — despite the food manufacturing sector's comparatively poor performance.

Though food is reasonably recession-proof (we all have to eat), a survey of the past decade by analysts at County NatWest Woodmac indicates that food manufacturing was near the bottom when it came to earnings growth, only 8 per cent a year on average. Supermarkets managed twice that.

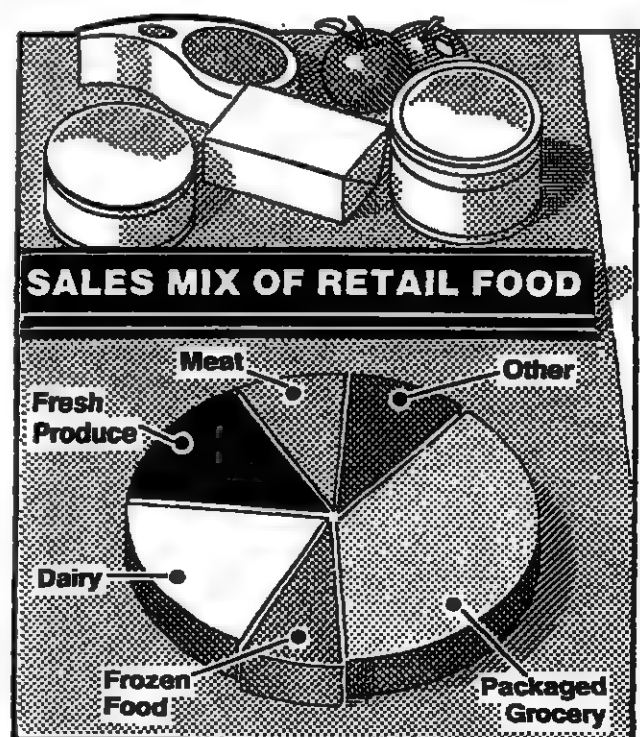
Yet food manufacturers are ripe for takeovers and mergers as the single European market approaches. The industry is still remarkably fragmented in the European Community, as 80 per cent of food is processed in the country where it is consumed.

Only a third of the mergers in Europe during the past two years have involved a company being taken over by a foreign company, and only half of Europe's top 50 food manufacturers have a presence in more than two countries.

In Britain, the dam could burst soon. Since Rowntree lost its independence, a big bid for a British company has been awaited for 18 months. Two big names have kept their independence against expectations. Rank Hovis McDougall has Sir James Goldsmith sitting on a 29.9 per cent stake, a handy platform for a bid. Cadbury Schweppes, which spent £700 million on acquisitions in 1989, sits uncomfortably with General Cinema as a 17.4 per cent shareholder.

Barclays de Zoete Wedd sees several factors pointing to the disappearance of independent UK food manufacturers.

Time is ripe for takeover of food makers



These include the need to consolidate to stand up to the big retailers, making savings from combining buying, production and marketing operations and vulnerability to hostile bids in the approach to 1992.

If the food sector really is coming out of the trough, now would be a good time for a predator to move, while share prices are depressed but with a profits recovery to come. However, bids may not come from the expected quarters. Stakeholders carrying high interest costs on their purchases are finding it hard to raise finance for full bids in times when leveraged share buying has fallen into disrepute.

Despite problems in 1989, such as weather extremes, high raw material costs and health scares, food manu-

facturers are optimistic. County NatWest Woodmac, in a report on the sector published this month, points out that the lowest growth in earnings was in the first half of the 1980s, at 3 per cent a year, while the second half of the decade saw levels as high as 15 per cent.

County sees growth in earnings of 9 per cent this year and 11 per cent in 1991, reflecting the benefits of past investment programmes, overseas earnings and acquisitions.

"The sector entered the 1980s as a fragmented, inefficient, largely domestically based industry, struggling to come to terms with the growing power of the major food retailers," County says. "It was imperative that the manufacturers improved their work practices if they were to make an adequate return."

County believes that margins will continue to improve over the next two years, reaching 7.9 per cent in 1991, compared with 4.6 per cent in 1980 and an estimated 7.2 per cent last year.

Barclays de Zoete Wedd warns that much will depend on whether the low profits of 1989 prove to be a blip. Although it expresses a lack of confidence in this hope, BZW admits: "It is possible to argue that the troubles of 1989 were exceptional and that 1990 should see a bounce back in domestic food earnings. We are inclined to the view that food demand is not going to slip dramatically in 1990. Nor, given the continued trends for women to work, do we expect households to be smaller and formal eating to decline."

However, it seems reasonable to conclude that to some extent at least, the squeeze on disposable incomes has contributed to the disappointing food results in 1989.

Pointing to rising disposable incomes, County NatWest Woodmac says: "While much of this increase has been spent on larger items such as electrical goods, the consumer is now more willing to pay for a food item, especially if it allows more time for work or leisure activities."

Indirectly, the concentration of food retailing among giants such as Sainsbury and Tesco has forced the pace of change in the manufacturing sector. County says: "Being at the sharp end of consumer spending, retailers were the first to identify the trends towards better quality and convenience, away from purchases made purely on price."

The challenge for the 1990s will be developing pan-European operations. There are only a few players now, notably Unilever of Britain and Netherlands, BSN of France and Nestlé of Switzerland.

The argument for consolidation in food manufacturing is that taste barriers, as well as trade barriers, are falling. Increased overseas travel and the spread of the deep freeze and the microwave are important factors. So, too, will be the dismantling of customs formalities and improvement in continental railway systems to speed distribution.

Computerized warehousing and distribution, already widespread on a national basis, can be used internationally. Products with the best chance of crossing international boundaries will be those with high added value, such as top quality convenience foods.

Rodney Hobson

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WORLD'S LEADING FOOD MAKERS

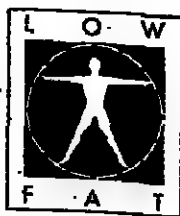
Company	Sales (\$bn)
1 Nestlé	24.0
2 Philip Morris	22.5
3 Unilever	16.0
4 RJR Nabisco	9.8
5 Archer Daniels	7.9
6 Sara Lee	7.3
7 Cadbury	7.1
8 Grand Met/Phillips	5.8
9 Heinz	5.8
10 BSN	4.6

Statistics refer to 1988
Source: County NatWest Woodmac

FOOD INDUSTRY STRUCTURE IN THE MAIN EUROPEAN MARKETS

Country	Total industry output (\$bn)	Total no of companies	Industry concentration (%)
Italy	97.3	40,000	16
France	97.0	4,018	62
UK	85.4	5,419	52
West Germany	84.0	4,269	26
Spain	38.2	2,608	28

* Percentage of industry controlled by the 50 largest companies
Source: CIA

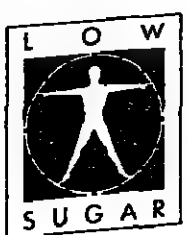


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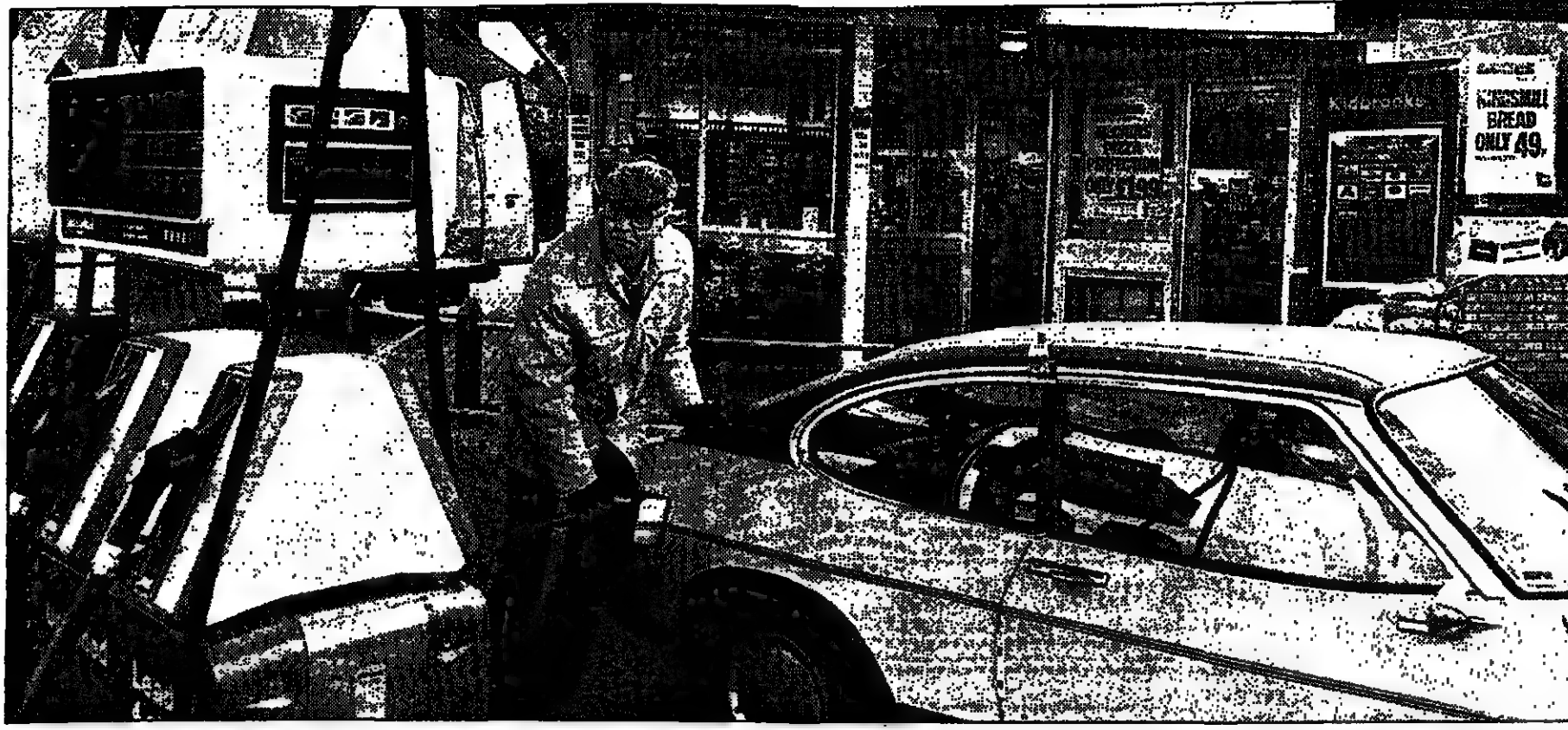


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the initiatives that keeps us in such good shape.

TESCO



Pump up the trolley



Stop and shop: behind the pumps a range of household necessities as well as impulse buys are ready to tempt the motorist who drops in to this south-east London service station

The oil company BP may never be a Sainsbury or a Safeway, yet it is helping to change the grocery trade by playing an increasing part in the "convenience store" sector. More than 30 of its petrol stations — owned and operated by the company, not licensees — have mini-supermarkets on them, 2,000 sq ft stores carrying about 2,500 items. BP's reasoning is that petrol has the low profit margin of 2p to 3p a gallon, while the mark-up on groceries and other purchases from the BP Express Shopping outlets is up to 20 per cent.

One key to BP's success as a mini-grocer is that most of the stores are open from 7am until 11pm, some around the clock — the hallmark of convenience shopping. Convenience stores are a local response to the domination of the supermarkets and superstores.

As the giants moved to the edge or out of town, they hammered a large nail in the coffin of the corner shop, squeezed out many high-street specialists such as butchers, bakers, confectioners and newsagents, and even drove out some of the smaller con-

Petrol station mini-markets give oil companies big profits and are convenient for the public, Malcolm Brown reports

ventional supermarkets. Convenience stores are not trying to compete with superstores but to complement them.

Superstores are for the big weekly shop, convenience stores for the "Dammit-I-forgot-it" purchases or the quick and easy buys. Mintel, a market research company, suggests they offer four basic types of goods — regular daily needs such as newspapers, cigarettes, bread and dairy products; forgotten and top-up items, including groceries, toiletries and cosmetics; impulse buys such as confectionery; and emergency items such as medicines. But the great advantages are their accessibility and availability.

Jacqueline Bowring, senior researcher with the Institute of Grocery Distribution, says the typical convenience store is open six or seven days from 6am to 11pm, most of its customers live within three miles, and it has about 10,000 customers a week. An average spend is £2, and £5 is

about the limit. The convenience store is becoming the neighbourhood shop.

It is estimated that Britain has 4,000 or 5,000 of them, more than three times as many as in the mid-1980s, in four main categories:

- Specialist convenience store operators who brought the American convenience store concept, with modifications, to Europe.
- Traditional grocers, former independents or "symbol" groups such as Spar and VG, which club together in special relationships with wholesalers.
- CTN (confectionery, tobacco and newspaper) stores, which have diversified out of pure CTN.
- Petrol station operators who have realized that groceries give good margins and that they occupy valuable real estate, which could be more intensively exploited.

The biggest single category consists of the symbol grocers, probably accounting for about 70 per cent of the market, groups

such as Spar (8 till Late), VG (Late Stop) and Mace (Convenience Express).

The symbol groups had to take the "convenience" route, Bowring says, because they could no longer compete with the multiples if they maintained their old hours and product ranges.

The largest symbol group, Spar, has moved into convenience shopping in a big way. Just under 2,000 of the outlets are now 8 till Late, says Bill Stratton, Spar (UK)'s marketing manager, and there is still growth left in the market. "The figure is rising all the time," he says. "As our retailers become more successful, they are looking to open second and third shops themselves."

The leading specialist convenience store operator is Circle K, with 230 outlets. "We're looking to have a chain of 500 by the end of the financial year ending in 1993," says Malcolm Cooke, the marketing director. "I see the convenience store market

generally expanding, becoming more professional and having to increase its standards because the customer is basically in a convenience store looking for quick, friendly, clean service."

Nearly all the participants in the market say shoppers' changing lifestyles are an important factor. People are increasingly in a rush, and more women are working, meaning more *ad hoc* shopping.

Bowring says the importance of late-night and Sunday trading could increase as more people not only want to choose when they shop but can afford to pay a premium for saving time.

The sector could be threatened by new Sunday trading laws. Bowring says: "If all stores of any size are permitted to open, the convenience store will lose that Sunday trading because the customer will use it as an extra shopping day and go to the large multiple store for the complete week's shop."

However, Keith Perkin, general manager of Polygon Retailing, which operates the BP Express Shopping outlets, would be more worried if the Government had a fit of righteousness and closed everybody.

Cool line on a new process

Irradiation fails to impress manufacturers, shoppers and retailers, even though the Government insists it improves food safety

Only about a quarter of Britain's shoppers are said to be ready even to try irradiated food, and the grocery trade is taking its cue from them in showing little enthusiasm for selling it.

"The Co-op is in the 'no' camp at the moment. All the chains — except Sainsbury — are in this category," Martin Henderson, of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, says. "Our primary concern is that food irradiation is used in the right way. We believe it has some merit in terms of food safety, but this would be limited."

Sainsbury's heavily qualified line is that, should the Government permit the sale of irradiated foods, the company would offer "the choice of food products which have the additional benefits resulting from irradiation".

So far, public opinion against food irradiation has shown no signs of softening. This is not surprising as almost the only consumer "education" is coming from the opposition, and the "Chernobyl effect" continues to exert its influence. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in a joint statement

chemicals that control, for example, the ripening process. It does not make food radioactive.

Supporters of irradiation say it will give products a longer shelf life and that food will be safer. The strongest claims are made on behalf of imported herbs and spices. In defence of the process, they say it cannot improve appearance, disguise taste or mask unpleasant odours.

Opponents say that irradiation kills good bacteria as well as bad — and then not all of them — leaving survivors to reproduce in a much more hospitable climate.

They also claim the process leads to nutritional deficiencies and that the whole question of the safety and well-being of consumers of irradiated food has still not been fully researched. Claims that irradiation is necessary to control food poisoning are rejected on the grounds that contamination can be tackled by improved hygiene and food-handling.

Furthermore, irradiation is condemned as incredibly expensive. Processing costs have been estimated by the WHO at 1p a kilo, and an economic irradiation plant would cost several million dollars. Opponents have also pointed out the difficulties of effectively "polishing" the irradiators. So far there is no way of detecting whether food has been irradiated. Against this backdrop, the question remains: who wants irradiation? The answer is the Government and irradiation scientists, rather than food manufacturers — and certainly not consumers and retailers.

The Government, which draws encouragement from the fact the process is permitted in 35 countries, insists that there is overwhelming scientific advice in favour of irradiation and that it can play an important part in improving food safety.

Anthony Cox



Clark: "a gloss on the rot"

Contrast the victory announcements of experts and authoritative figures do little to build public confidence.

"It's simply another form of food preservation," says John Wood, of the Food and Drink Federation, which represents manufacturers, while Labour's food spokesman, Dr David Clark, claims food irradiation is like "using gloss paint to cover up rotten walls".

Irradiation uses gamma rays or electron beams to penetrate food and kill bacteria or break up

BRITAIN'S No1 BRAND

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Persil automatic

original non-biological

Persil automatic

Persil is Britain's largest grocery brand.

BASED ON 1989 STERLING SALES (Source: Nielsen)

In the front line against bacteria

Food producers keep up their guard against the causes and dangers of contamination, Anthony Cox writes

Once it was *botulinus* knocking a hefty dent in the tin of salmon; now it is "mad cow disease" that is leading to bans on British cattle intestines as biceps casings. In between botulism and bovine spongiform encephalopathy came the salmonella and listeria food scares.

Bacteria are everywhere and, with more than 40,000 reported cases a year, food poisoning remains one of nature's constants.

"Salmonella is something that local authorities were dealing with long before it was fashionable to talk about it," says Evan Sturaker, an environmental health officer for Ashford council in Kent.

Nevertheless, media attention and mounting consumer concern have put the maintenance of public confidence in the safety of their products at the top of the agenda for Britain's grocers. A year ago, in the wake of the salmonella crisis, six leading supermarket chains — Gateway, Sainsbury, Tesco, Safeway, Asda and Morrisons, a north of England company — set up the Food Safety Advisory Centre to provide information for worried consumers. The centre subsequently made £500,000

available for a three-year programme of research into the cause of food poisoning.

Gateway, like other leading multiples, maintains a quality-assurance department, to check on the quality of the food it sells.

"With our own products, the responsibility for testing falls on us, but with branded products we insist on it being carried out by the manufacturer, although, increasingly, our own people are visiting manufacturers," says Debbie Young, of Gateway press relations, whose supermarkets turn over more than £70 million a week.

"The quality-assurance staff are responsible for what goes into Gateway-branded products. They visit factories and make sure that hygiene standards are being applied."

"We stock a huge range of brands and have not the resources to check every single product, so we ask manufacturers to supply certificates. For example, with soft cheeses, we demand from each manufacturer a guarantee that each batch is free from listeria. We also look at our stores to see that they are hygienic, that our staff are trained and that foodstuffs are looked after."

The Co-operative movement, Britain's largest retailer, echoes this account of the steps manufacturers and retailers are taking to ensure high standards of food safety.



Shepherd's delight? Nigel Pittock, a scientific food control officer for Ashford council's environmental health team, checks a pie being prepared in a kitchen

those of its suppliers. "We send our technical people to every factory we use, or may be considering using, to ensure everything is up to scratch and our specifications are met," Henderson says. "We would de-list any factory that did not meet our standards. Our specifications also include environmental considerations. We do not want

goods from factories that pollute the atmosphere." Local authority environmental health officers responsible for tackling problems of food safety would like to see changes in the law.

"We're looking for the Government to strengthen powers in the Food Protection Bill in terms of controls at the sharp end — the food premises," says

Sturaker, who thinks food safety standards in grocery stores are "improving" rather than "wholly satisfactory".

He acknowledges, however, that "the bulk of food poisoning identifiable in terms of an outbreak", rather than sporadic cases, is almost inevitably related to catering in one form or another. Sturaker adds that increasing public

and medical awareness of food poisoning have led to a national increase in reported incidents. "Nevertheless, in five years we have not had an outbreak of food poisoning at Ashford — just a few linked cases and a number of isolated ones."

Last year, Britain's grocers faced a different kind of threat to the safety of the products on their shelves. Food poisoning was joined by "consumer terrorism", in which blackmailers threatened to spike foodstuffs unless ransom demands were met. One blackmailer demanded £1.5 million from two companies.

In the House of Commons, John Patten, the Home Office minister, said the food manufacturing industry had "an excellent health, safety and hygiene record over many years".

Gateway's Debbie Young says: "To try to overcome the problem of people tampering with products, we have obvious security — in-store cameras, vigilant staff and constant checking, for example — to deter people. It is difficult, because we don't want supermarkets where everything is behind bars. Packaging is a matter for manufacturers, but we have an opinion on products. We are moving more and more to tamper-evident packaging in areas where it can be done simply and cheaply — a paper strip across the top of a pot of jam, for example."

Government rule that hits the trade's charity

Leonard Reeves-Smith is a disillusioned Tory. The director of the National Grocers' Benevolent Fund, a charity which helps out former grocery trade employees who have fallen on hard times, says he is angry at a decision which will take money needlessly from "hard-up old people" (Malcolm Brown writes).

The target of his anger is the Department of Social Security, which last year said it would disallow the summer and Christmas bonuses paid out by many charities. The department said this type of regular payment would be

classified as income, and an equivalent amount deducted from the pensioner's benefit. The fund, which pays £5 a week to its beneficiaries (any greater amount would be deducted penny for penny from state benefits), had been paying bonuses worth £85 a year to a single person and £120 to a married couple. This has been halted because of the department's ruling.

"I think it's a particularly mean and spiteful act," Reeves-Smith says. "If it saved the Government money I could see the point, but it does not."

The fund's beneficiaries are unable to stand up for themselves on the issue: 98 per cent of the pensioners are over 70, and until her death earlier this year, the oldest beneficiary was a 102-year-old widow.

Established in 1964, the fund, grew out of three much older organizations: the London Grocers' and Tea Dealers' Benevolent Society, formed in 1837 to help independent grocers in the London area; the Grocers' Federation Benevolent Fund (1897), which aided independent grocers on a national basis, and the Grocery

Employees' National Benevolent Society (1908). The two "employer" charities prospered, but had few pensioners, while the "employee" charity lacked money. It made sense, Reeves-Smith says, to combine forces and provide a service for the whole trade, including food manufacturers and wholesalers.

The fund now has about 1,100 beneficiaries, some of them married; the number of people helped is about 1,400. Last year the fund paid out almost £400,000. To be eligible for assistance, a potential beneficiary must have worked in

the trade for at least 15 years and be in financial need. This usually means they are on income support grants.

"We have a genteel form of means test," Reeves-Smith says. "Applicants fill in a form with their outgoings and their income, which is either just the state pension and a small occupational pension, or the state pension and income support. If outgoings are higher than income, they're eligible."

One group of beneficiaries — people in nursing homes — gets significantly more than the basic

£5. Ironically, considering its action on the bonuses, the department has a different attitude to financial support for these people. The fund pays them up to £30 a week without a word from the department, which probably would have to bear the extra costs itself if the charity did not pick up the tab.

Reeves-Smith will begin a recruiting drive for new pensioners soon. He hopes to enlist at least another 200 this year. He is concentrating on the North-East and is hoping to make several local radio broadcasts.



Reeves-Smith: "a spiteful act"

Own-brand comes of age



The name you notice: the George Range, the label from George and Liz Davies, sells competitively priced clothing for Asda

Consumers buy the big brands, built up and sustained by national advertising, because they have become familiar and are trusted. They give consumers a sense of security, the grocery trade believes. Yet own brands, the ranges of goods which usually carry the name of a grocery chain as their label, are increasingly filling supermarket shelves.

All the leading grocery chains have thousands of own-brand lines. At J. Sainsbury, Britain's biggest grocer, which was one of the first to move into own brands, its own-label goods account for 55 per cent of sales. Its food science and technology laboratories, first set up in 1936, are the biggest operated by any food retailer in Europe. Its experts work closely with buyers and suppliers on product development. Tesco, the second largest food retailer, has 2,500 own-brand lines and is adding another 1,000 this year. For household goods and clothing, it uses the Delamere label, a name deriving from Delamere Avenue, where Tesco's headquarters is located in Chesham, Hertfordshire.

The Safeway chain, part of the Argyll group, plans to

Name brands are still selling well, yet big outlets are expanding sales of their own label products

increase its own-brand share of sales from 35 per cent to 42 per cent.

Asda, an early exponent of superstore-style shopping, once relied entirely on branded goods, despite other chains moving more strongly into own brands. A key appeal of own brands for retailers is that they get a better profit margin on them. There is much less of an advertising cost element and the bigger chains also have hefty financial muscle to strike advantageous deals with suppliers. Now Asda has well over 3,000 own-brand grocery lines, accounting for about 40 per cent of the chain's range of goods. Asda was able to follow a national-brands-only policy longer because it had a larger non-food element in its stores, a sector with higher margins than food.

Asda's latest move to strengthen its brand appeal has been to create an exclusive label by commissioning a com-

plete clothing range from George Davies and his wife Liz to be known as the George Range. It will be the couple's first business venture since leaving the Next chain in December 1988. The brief has been to produce good quality clothes at prices which undercut key competitors. Men's suits will for instance be priced at less than £90 and men's shirts start at £7.99.

The retail co-operative societies — numbering about 80, all run independently — sell a wide range of goods under the Co-op label. Behind that branding drive has been the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS), which is primarily manufacturer and wholesale supplier to the retail societies, although it now has substantial retail interests of its own. The co-ops as a whole spend the most of any group on advertising its own brand.

Gateway has taken the route to in-house branding by

launching more than 1,500 lines under exclusive or house brand names. Hence Good Morning cereals, Tea Blend tea and Le Fizz soft drinks among others.

Some food and grocery goods manufacturers, although producing their own national brands, will often use at least 20 per cent of their capacity in producing own-brand goods to retailer specification. It can be a way of using spare capacity, or by justifying the use of a bigger manufacturing facility, can help keep down their costs overall.

The Mintel consultancy, in its latest review of food retailing, says most retailers feel own-brand penetration will increase in the future but at nothing like the rate of growth of recent years. This is clearly a tribute to the strength of well-established national brands.

Nevertheless, own brands are taking on an individual authority which grows all the time. The St Michael of Marks & Spencer and the own labels of Sainsbury, Tesco, Asda and all the rest can surely only gain in power.

Derek Harris

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and Colman Products Inc. (f/a Companys of Norwich) Borden Inc and Others before Lord Bridge of Harwich, Lord Brandon of Oakbrook, Lord Oliver of Aylmerton, Lord Goff of Chieveley and Lord Mustill of Titcheltown.

the foundation of his claim for any relief, he had voluntarily involved himself in an irreconcilable conflict between his duty as a director and his personal interests.

Section 317 of the 1985 Act showed the importance that the legislature attached to the principle that a company should be protected against a director who had a conflict and duty.

Both before and after *Jamna Ram*, in 1986, Mr Ward had owed

duty to tender to Gunning impartial and independent advice untainted by any possibility of personal gain. By the agreement with the committee, I had debarred himself from giving such impartial and independent advice.

Nevertheless, his failure to realise that he could not properly use his position as director of Guinness to obtain a contingent negotiating fee of £5.5 million did not excuse him or enable him to defeat the rules of equity that prohibited a trustee

from putting himself in a position in which his interests and duty conflicted and that insisted that a trustee or any other fiduciary should not make a profit out of his trust.

Finally, Mr Ward resisted judgment on Guinness' application in reliance on section 727 of the 1985 Act, which provided that if it appeared to the court that an officer of a company had acted honestly

and reasonably and that in all the circumstances he ought fairly to be excused for his negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust the court might relieve him from his liability, either wholly or partly.

But, by invoking that section as a defence to Guinness's claim for repayment, Mr Ward sought an order of the court that would entitle him to remuneration without the authority of the

That would be a breach of the articles that protected shareholders and governed directors and of the principles of equity to which his Lordship had referred.

Lord Keith and Lord Brandon agreed with Lord Templeman. Lord Goff delivered a concurring opinion and Lord Griffiths agreed with Lord Templeman and Lord Goff.

BUYER

as to call immediately to mind a lemon that the item was not a lemon. It would be supposed that a very large number of shoppers at each of Borden's lemon stands was no more than an immature variant of the Jiff lemon.

On those findings, it was difficult to fault the conclusion at which both the judge and the Court of Appeal arrived, that the proposed use by Borden of any of their Mark I, Mark II or Mark III versions would constitute an unlawful passing off.

In the end, the question came down to whether Borden, deliberately adopting out of the many possible shapes a container, a container having the most immediately striking feature of Colman's get-up, had taken sufficient steps to distinguish their product from that of Colman: *Payton & Co Ltd v. Snelline, Larnard & Co Ltd*.

The essence of the action for passing off was a deceit practised on the public and it could be no answer, in a case where it was demonstrable that the public had been or would be deceived, that they would not have been if they had been more careful, more literate or more perspicacious.

they were found; per Lord Blackburn in *R. Johnson & Co v Archibald Orr Ewing & Co* ((1882) 7 App Cas 219, 229). In the light of the trial judge's finding, there was no escape from the proposition that Comman were entitled to the injunction which they obtained in the form in which it was granted. It was pointed out that recent decisions of their Lordships' House, for instance, *British Overseas Airways Corp v D'Amico*

Leyland Rubber Corporation Ltd. v. Armstrong Patents Co. Ltd. ([1986] AC 577) and In re Coca-Cola Co. ([1986] 1 WLR 692) had stressed the suspicion with which the House regarded an attempt to extend or perpetuate a monopoly and it was suggested again that, because it was no easy in the circumstances of this market effectively to distinguish Borden's products for Colman's except at considerable expense, Colman were achieving, in effect,

His Lordship did not accept all that that was so, but in any event the principle that no man was entitled to steal another's trade by deceit was one of at least equal importance.

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In Phiggs v Boardman (1964) WLR 993, Mr Justice Wilberforce, approved by the House of Lords (1967) 2 AC 46) had

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1989(G)	GETTINGER GOLF GT 16V 150 BHP Bladepower Power Steering, Electric Windows, Sunroof, Alloy 9,000 Mls	\$16,950
1990(G)	GOLF GT 5 DOOR Finished in Diamond Silver Metallic, Sunroof, BBS Alloys	\$10,750
1988(G)	GOLF GT 3 DOOR Finished in Tomato Red Sunroof, Alloy, 3,000 Mls	\$9,995
1988(F)	GOLF GT COVERTIBLE Sapphire Blue Metallic Alloy, 11,000	\$9,995

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FOOTBALL

Czechoslovak set to join West Ham in £300,000 transfer

By Dennis Signy and Louise Taylor

Ludek Miklosko, the 31st Czechoslovak World Cup goalkeeper, flies to London from Prague today to join West Ham United in a £300,000 transfer from Banik Ostrava, the Czechoslovak champions.

Miklosko, aged 28, has won 31 caps with his country and is in the World Cup squad for the finals in Italy in June. He will be eligible for the Littlewoods Cup semi-finals against Oldham Athletic at Boundary Park, next Wednesday, although West Ham are likely to retain Phil Parkes for that game.

Miklosko trained for a week with West Ham in December but the football authorities were at first reluctant to let him sign. After an intervention by Ron Leighton, the MP for Newham, the Department of Employment finally granted a work permit yesterday. Miklosko, who speaks little English, will initially be accompanied by an interpreter.

He has played for Czechoslovakia in the Olympics and, in all, has made 53 international appearances. Imre Varadi became the latest player to follow Howard Wilkinson from Hillsborough to Elland Road yesterday, when he signed for Leeds United in a £50,000 transfer. The forward, who will be reunited with his former manager at Sheffield United, follows the same path as Sterland, Shutt, and Pearson. Varadi could make his debut for the second division leaders in tomorrow's home match against Hull City. Leeds still managed to leave themselves with a profit on the day by selling Blake, the central defender, to Stoke City for £175,000.

Just Fashanu, the former £1 million Norwich City and Nottingham Forest forward, is expected to join Ipswich Town on loan. Fashanu, aged 23, who has been plagued by knee injuries in recent seasons,

appeared for Ipswich reserves against Southampton reserves on Wednesday. John Duncan, the Ipswich manager, said: "There is a possibility that Justin will appear in another reserve game in the near future."

He will be joined there by Hill and Zondervan, back in light training after long-term injuries. Ipswich are also contemplating taking Meade, once of Arsenal, on trial.

Derek Ferguson, the Glasgow Rangers midfielder player, appears poised to join John Aldridge, formerly of Liverpool, at Real Sociedad in Spain. Sociedad are keen to import more British players, in the wake of their decision to end their "Basques only" policy. They are believed to be willing to invest around £700,000 in Ferguson.

Gerry Francis, the Bristol Rovers manager, and Paul Nixon, one of his players, were interviewed by police on Tuesday night after Nixon alleged that he had been assaulted by Francis. The incident took place in a hotel car park on the way to a game from a Leyland DAF Cup tie against Brentford. No one was charged. The club said that disciplinary measures were being considered by "the manager in conjunction with the board".

The Brighton and Hove Albion manager, Barry Lloyd, expects to take the Soviet Union international, Sergei Gotsmanov, aged 30, on a month's trial from Dynamo Minsk.

Coventry want review

John Poynton, the Coventry City chairman, has tonight called for a review of the Football League management committee's decision to award the first division runners-up a place in Europe next season rather than the Littlewoods Cup winners (Chris Hughton has suffered disappointment). Poynton said: "There has been no consultation with the clubs on this issue."

Coventry meet Nottingham Forest on Sunday in the first leg of their Littlewoods Cup semi-final.

● Lloyd McNair, the Coventry City midfielder player, who is

being treated for a gashed shin, is feared to have a stress fracture.

● Mark Wright, Derby County's England centre half, has asked for a personal hearing after being charged with bringing the same level of disrespect by the Football Association. Wright was sent off in the League match at Manchester United on January 13.

● The Stockport County defender, Bill Williams, has been suspended for three matches and fined £250 after admitting a charge of bringing the game into disrepute.

Club gives up against vandalism

South Liverpool, of the HFLS League, has decided to give up its fight against vandalism. The club has decided that it can no longer cope with damage to their Holy Park ground, which they estimate has cost them £200,000 in recent years (Paul Newman writes).

The club, from the Garsington district of the city, has two social clubs, both of which were burned down last summer. The bigger of the two had been broken into 21 times in the previous 12 months. The smaller club had suffered three serious fires and needs have regularly been wrecked. The final straw came last month, when a perimeter wall was smashed with sledge hammers. It is now more than 100 yards of the wall which the club believes its ground would not be up to HFLS League standards next season.

Insurance will no longer provide cover for the ground. "We believe we've done everything we can. We even got a guard dog, but that failed because the vandals befriended it. We're a good community club. We run five very successful football teams. We admit all children free of charge, but all of that has had no effect."

South Liverpool have played at Holy Park for 56 years. The local council is now helping them to look for a new site and they may move out of the city.

Clubs must meet the ground rules

Non-League football by Paul Newman

GM Vauxhall Conference clubs seeking promotion to the Football League will have to meet the ground requirements in future years. The League is ready to introduce detailed criteria on stadium facilities which will include both bigger capacities and a higher proportion of seats than is currently demanded.

Even before the recent Taylor report on ground safety, the League was planning to change its requirements for promoted clubs. Until now it had no specific criteria for clubs to follow, but in future it will base its criteria on the Conference's own "A" grade, with stiffer requirements in a number of key areas.

The most difficult criteria for clubs to meet are likely to be those involving capacity and seating. From 1991 promoted clubs are likely to need a safety certificate with a 6,000 capacity and the potential to increase the figure to 10,000. A considerably higher proportion of seats is also likely to be demanded.

Few Conference clubs could meet those criteria without spending heavily. Under less stringent requirements, Maidstone United, who were promoted last summer, had to spend £500,000 on improvements to the ground they share with Dartford and which was of a similar standard to the stadiums of many leading non-

League clubs.

Of those in contention for promotion this season, Kettering Town, Barnet, and Welling United have already had their grounds inspected and Dartford, Macclesfield Town and Kilmarnock will be visited within the next few weeks.

Although Welling's ground is believed to fall considerably short of requirements, League officials are understood to have been impressed by Kettering's facilities and to be reasonably satisfied with Barnet's.

The chances of Barnet winning promotion have grown steadily in recent weeks as Dartford and Macclesfield have faltered, and a 4-0 victory at home to Merthyr Tydfil on Tuesday saw them return to the top of the table for the first time for nearly two years.

Dartford, who have signed Steve Mardenborough, the Chelsea forward, for an undisclosed fee, could lose further ground when tomorrow they travel to fifth placed Kettering. Second placed Macclesfield go to Exeter.

England will play Italy in a semi-professional international at Salarno on February 25. A Dunstable, who were expelled from the FA Cup after their players walked off the pitch during a qualifying round match at Staines Town, have also been banned from next season's competition.

SNOOKER



Young master: Stephen Hendry, the defending champion, coes up at Wembley yesterday

Lineker cannot spur Thorne

By Steve Acteson

It was just one of those days for Willie Thorne at the Benson and Hedges Masters at Wembley yesterday. With Gary Lineker, his footballing friend, and Paul Gascoigne and Naysim, Lineker's Tottenham Hotspur colleagues, sitting in the stands to offer support, the world No. 9 scored a series of unimpressive own goals and was heavily beaten 5-1 by Stephen Hendry, the title holder, from Scotland.

Thorne was to be dangerous from long range, but his shooting was sadly away. He hit 24-9 in the first frame but missed a long red and Hendry, the world No. 3, who can score from any position, made 49, and then cleared to pink.

Thorne led in frame two with a break of 50 to love, but a rash swipe at a red left Hendry in for 45. Even though Hendry stumbled over the second red, Thorne missed the brown and Hendry cleared to pink for 2-0.

A lead of 59-16 proved equally insecure in frame three. But this time Hendry missed his footing on the final brown, for Thorne to make his only successful strike, but Hendry sprinted through the fourth frame and Thorne then found the interval no less irritating. Hendry was not to be unhook his dressing-room door.

In frame five Hendry was 46-0 behind, but a fluked red helped close the gap and then his clearance of 48 put him virtually out of sight.

After easily winning frame six to reach the semi-finals, he even suggested that Thorne should put in some extra training. "He has been struggling with his form for a while now but I don't think he is the sort of player who goes to work hard on the practice table when he needs to. He is certainly that is what I do," Hendry said.

Thorne suggested that six hours a day practice at the age of 36 was harder than at Hendry's age, 21, but thought he would still give it a go.

Thorne's defeat: S. Hendry (50-16) v W. Thorne (24-9). Frame 1: 5-1. Frame 2: 2-0. Frame 3: 1-2. Frame 4: 0-4. Frame 5: 46-0. Frame 6: 1-2. Frame 7: 1-2. Frame 8: 1-2. Frame 9: 1-2. Frame 10: 1-2. Frame 11: 1-2. Frame 12: 1-2. Frame 13: 1-2. Frame 14: 1-2. Frame 15: 1-2. Frame 16: 1-2. Frame 17: 1-2. Frame 18: 1-2. Frame 19: 1-2. Frame 20: 1-2. Frame 21: 1-2. Frame 22: 1-2. Frame 23: 1-2. Frame 24: 1-2. Frame 25: 1-2. Frame 26: 1-2. Frame 27: 1-2. Frame 28: 1-2. Frame 29: 1-2. Frame 30: 1-2. Frame 31: 1-2. Frame 32: 1-2. Frame 33: 1-2. Frame 34: 1-2. Frame 35: 1-2. Frame 36: 1-2. Frame 37: 1-2. Frame 38: 1-2. Frame 39: 1-2. Frame 40: 1-2. Frame 41: 1-2. Frame 42: 1-2. Frame 43: 1-2. Frame 44: 1-2. Frame 45: 1-2. Frame 46: 1-2. Frame 47: 1-2. Frame 48: 1-2. Frame 49: 1-2. Frame 50: 1-2. Frame 51: 1-2. Frame 52: 1-2. Frame 53: 1-2. Frame 54: 1-2. Frame 55: 1-2. Frame 56: 1-2. Frame 57: 1-2. Frame 58: 1-2. Frame 59: 1-2. Frame 60: 1-2. Frame 61: 1-2. Frame 62: 1-2. Frame 63: 1-2. 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TOMORROW'S
SPORT

Sebastian Coe: the past and the future

In *THE TIMES* tomorrow, Sebastian Coe writes the first of two exclusive articles that provide a remarkable insight into athletes and athletics. How does he view his rivals in a dozen years in international sport? Whom does he select as the best of the new generation of British athletes?



Stolen tickets offered for ransom

By John Goodbody and David Hands

Thieves have demanded a £100,000 ransom for nearly 400 tickets for next week's England v Wales rugby union international, which were stolen from a safe belonging to Mike Burton, the former British Lion.

Burton, who runs a sports promotion company, Mike Burton Management, in Gloucester, is seeking replacements for the tickets to satisfy his clients, many of whom had planned to go to Twickenham next week on corporate hospitality packages.

"I had orders for all these tickets and it is going to be hard to find enough to keep everyone happy," he said. The

thieves removed the safe from the wall of his city-centre office and a few hours after discovering the theft, Burton found a handwritten note pushed through his office door demanding £100,000 for the return of the safe and tickets, which had a face value of up to £18 but are worth several times more on the black market.

Burton said: "I knew tickets for England v Wales are valuable, but not that valuable. We were asked to put a signal in the window indicating whether we were willing to pay up. We tried it in the hope of catching them but nothing happened."

Detective Sergeant David Turner, of Gloucester Police, said that the safe had been

removed by "brute force".

Rugby supporters are being warned not to buy tickets on the black market and the police appealed for information from anyone who has been offered tickets for the match. Burton must be in a quandary about telling the Rugby Football Union exactly which tickets are missing. He would have bought them from several sources and would be loath to give the governing body the information that might help to identify the suppliers. The RFU explicitly warns clubs, schools and its constituent bodies that tickets should not be resold for a profit.

This is the second disaster to hit Burton's business this year. Last month, he had to spend £30,000 on alternative

air travel for clients going to an international match in Dublin, after the collapse of an airline which was to have taken them.

Dudley Wood, the Rugby Football Union secretary, said: "We take a keen interest in this matter. We would not be surprised if Mike Burton had obtained several hundred tickets. We know the size of his operation and that he has close contacts with a number of clubs, for whom he may make speeches in return for tickets."

"But we do not know which tickets he has laid his hands on, though we should like to know the ticket numbers if they are recovered. What will happen to his hospitality marquees near the ground I do

not know, but there is nothing we can do."

The RFU has been working to reduce the black-market element involved on international match days at Twickenham, and is particularly concerned this season since the ground capacity is reduced to 51,000 because of the rebuilding of the North Stand.

"We are inundated with letters from people who are extremely cross at not getting tickets," Wood added. "Demand is five times our capacity this season and people are very frustrated when they see a black-market operation at work."

"I would prefer that we did not have people buying black-market tickets turning up here, but we think that, even if

we have not been winning the war, we have been making life extremely difficult for the operators, a number of whom have pulled out."

Two years ago, at the equivalent international, hundreds of businessmen were upset when a hospitality company failed to provide the tickets it had promised. The Macworth organization was forced to tell its clients during lunch in a marquee before the game that the tickets were not available and hundreds of people had to watch the match on television.

Many hospitality companies rely on the flourishing black-market business to obtain tickets for big sports events in Britain, including the FA Cup final and Wimbledon.

Graf out for six weeks after skiing accident

By Andrew Longmore, Tennis Correspondent

Steffi Graf will be out of tennis for at least six weeks after breaking her right thumb in a skiing accident in St Moritz. Graf was due to see a specialist in Heidelberg today to decide if an operation is needed, but the world champion will have to pull out of tournaments in Boca Raton and Key Biscayne next month.

"Only when the doctors have looked at the injury will be able to say exactly how long she will have to rest," Horst Schmiedt, Graf's press spokesman, said. "But Steffi is going to be forced out of the game for a long time."

Graf was scheduled to play a cameo role alongside other sporting champions such as Niki Lauda and Florence Griffith-Joyner in a film called *Fire, Ice and Dynamite*, produced by Willi Bogner, the West German director. But earlier in the day, while on the nursery slopes, attempting to escape from photographers she tripped and fell on her right hand.

She was immediately taken to St Moritz General Hospital where her right arm was put in plaster and from there back to West Germany for specialist

advice. Initial reports after the accident on Wednesday evening suggested that Graf had torn ligaments in her right hand, but yesterday doctors said that she had broken a bone in her thumb.

Either way, Graf will be out of action for at least six to eight weeks, which will certainly prove a blessing to her rivals and could even prove a blessing to the Wimbledon champion. By her own admission, Graf was short of motivation and not at her best in the Australian Open last month, despite defending her title for the third time.

Graf's initial aim is to be back in time for a tournament at Hilton Head in the first week of April, but the enforced rest could prove to be the best preparation possible in her build-up to the French Open in May and to Wimbledon in June.

Another loss for tennis followers is that in missing the tournament in Boca Raton, in March, Graf will also miss a possible rendezvous with Jennifer Capriati, who will be making her long-awaited professional debut just before her fourteenth birthday.

Bates shows his frailty

Jeremy Bates, who beat Yannick Noah in the first round of the Stella Artois indoor tournament in Milan, was brought down to earth by Jakob Hlasek yesterday. The big Czech-born Swiss player beat the British No. 1 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 to reach the third round, leaving Bates to reflect once again on unfulfilled promise.

The match turned on one break in each set and one or two stray points, none more important than in the second

game of the third set when Bates led 40-15 only to be broken.

"It was such a tight match, the whole outcome depended on a few points here and there," Bates said.

RESULTS FROM MILAN: J. Bates (GB) vs Y. Noah (FR), 7-5, 6-4, 4-6, 6-3; J. McEnroe (US) vs A. Panatta (ITA), 6-4, 6-4, 6-4; J. Hlasek (CZE) vs J. Capriati (USA), 6-3, 6-2, 6-2; J. Hlasek (CZE) vs J. McEnroe (US), 6-3, 6-2, 6-2; J. Hlasek (CZE) vs J. McEnroe (US), 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

Beverage sponsors elude curb

By John Goodbody

The drinks industry has survived a ministerial move to curtail its sponsorship of sport, worth at least £18 million a year.

A meeting of the Government's Committee on Alcohol Abuse has instead asked Colin Moynihan, the Minister for Sport, to meet the Portman Group, representing the drinks industry, in an attempt to get companies to promote low-alcohol brands.

Moynihan has always defended the right of drinks companies to have an unlimited annual budget for sponsorship. Some ministers would prefer an agreement between the Government and the companies restricting the amount. This is what occurs with tobacco sponsorship, with only about £8 million now being spent every year.

Research Services Ltd, the company that monitors figures in Britain, estimated that last year about £18 million, just under one-tenth of the total, came from drinks companies.

At its meeting on Wednesday, the Government committee decided it wanted companies to extend their promotion of low-alcohol brands, rather than for them to replace the beverages they at present use for sponsorship.

The Health Education Council said in August 1988 that it found any sponsorship by alcohol companies "inappropriate", stating: "The use of sport to raise the profile of alcohol helps drink to be seen more favourably and to be seen to be more socially acceptable."

Some sports, which have a particularly youthful image, such as gymnastics, swimming and volleyball, have a policy of not seeking sponsorship from drinks companies.

National is taken off the agenda

By George Rae

There will be no Aintree challenge from Desert Orchid this year. "The joint-owners and myself have decided that Desert Orchid will miss the Grand National," David Elsworth, the horse's trainer, said at Wincanton yesterday.

"He will be withdrawn at the next fortnight stage on Tuesday," Elsworth added. "He goes for the Cheltenham Gold Cup and then for either the Whitbread Gold Cup or possibly the Irish Grand National, depending on how he comes out of Cheltenham."

The decision ends the arguments which have surrounded Desert Orchid's possible participation, although there is the long-term probability that he will be entered for the National next year.

Richard Burridge, partner of last year's Gold Cup hero, who leaves for Australia on a business trip today, has become increasingly disturbed by the media pantomime which has enveloped the issue.

After Desert Orchid had won at Wincanton yesterday, he said: "The whole circus was in danger of getting out of hand. I've always said it was unlikely that Desert Orchid would go for the National this year and I felt that unless we made up our minds there was no telling where it would end."

"All owners and trainers have discussions about their horses but our every move has had to be conducted and discussed in public."

Elsworth has made no secret of his belief that this is the year in which Desert Orchid could have conquered the Aintree course. But the owners have never shared that certainty. It is they who have had the last word.

Wincanton victory, page 36

England call up untested Lewis as replacement

From Alan Lee, Cricket Correspondent, Castries, St Lucia

The England tour selectors appear to be indulging in a curious game of risk. Given the chance to stabilize and strengthen their attack by the demise of one notoriously unfit fast bowler, they have exchanged him for another.

Chris Lewis, a bowler of undoubted promise but so far limited achievement, has, remarkably, been preferred to Steve Watkins as replacement for the homebound Ricardo Elcock. Lewis, presently in Kenya with the England A team, is expected to arrive in Trinidad on Sunday, three days before his 22nd birthday.

Micky Stewart, the England team manager, yesterday spoke glowingly of Lewis's "pace, wicket-taking ability and strike rate". He is confident, on medical advice, that the circulation problem known as Raynaud's disease which caused Lewis to miss



Lewis: preferred to Watkins half of last season is under control.

Even if one accepts this premise and disregards the further uncertainty imposed on a team with more than its share of injury concerns, the selection is a further rebuff to Watkins. He carried a weak Glamorgan attack on his young shoulders last summer, earned high praise and never broke down.

No one in the country took more than his total of 94 first-

class wickets and, despite having to bowl at unhelpful times and for long spells (something which Lewis seldom had to do in a far more experienced attack), he took his wickets at a commendable 25 apiece.

"He was over-bowled" was Stewart's judgement. This does scant credit to a man who undercomplainingly got through almost 800 overs, as opposed to the 300 by Lewis.

The choice only concerned Lewis and Watkins and was, according to Stewart, "very close". Gooch, the captain, may have been a waverer. He sees a lot of Neil Foster in Watkins and was impressed by his strength and control last year. When Essex played Leicestershire at Grace Road last September, Gooch scored 158; Lewis returned two for 137.

Lewis was born in Guyana, which means that, despite Elcock's departure, England have a player from each of four Caribbean countries.

Dampening the spirits on and off the field

Weather forces a gloomy start

From Richard Streeton, Johannesburg

This blighted tour even incurred the wrath of the weather gods yesterday when rain and bad light allowed only 3½ hours play in the first five-day cricket international between South Africa and the English XI.

What play took place was absorbing, gritty and evenly fought, as the touring side reached 113 for three after being put in. South Africa were poorly served by their inexperienced bowlers, particularly early on. McMillan dismissed Robinson and Broad in three overs near the end; otherwise Cook might have rued his decision to field first.

It was a new experience to be given a hand-out from the local police at the close summarizing the day of action against would-be disrupters.

Paris — The international sporting boycott of South Africa will not be lifted until apartheid is ended, according to Fekron Kidane, chairman of the International Campaign against Apartheid in Sport (ICAPS).

The city magistrates had refused permits to demonstrate, both against the pro- and anti-tour factions. The former limited themselves to an aeroplane that joined the police helicopters overhead as it trailed a banner in support of the Englishmen.

Tour opponents had a harder time. Mini-buses picking up protesters three miles away in the township of Alexandra were stopped and the passengers returned home. Later some 2,000 people were stopped; they refused to negotiate and were dispersed with tear gas. Police alleged that the media had tried to transport potential demonstrators to the ground, while the British consulate was also the scene of anti-tour action.

As to the cricket, the English XI played it very safe indeed: neither Thomas nor Dille was risked, and an extra batsman was included.

Athey never looked comfortable and Donald bowled him off his body in the fifth over. Snell improved in a later



Unhappy Wanderers: police prepare themselves for action

spell, but Jennings, the South African wicketkeeper, still had to drive around a good deal.

Broad and Robinson had their moments of luck, but hung on as 81 runs were added in 34 overs. In poor light, McMillan's late breakthrough was a just reward for a player who always seemed to be scheming more than his colleagues. Robinson, known as a poor hooker, was tempted to try the stroke, and spooned a catch to long leg. Then Broad fenced at a rising ball that left him and was caught behind

after an innings which lasted for 47 overs.

ENGLISH XI: First innings
B C Broad c Jennings b McMillan 48
C W J Athey b Donald 15
R T Robinson c Snell b McMillan 31
M W Gatting not out 7
A P Wells not out 1
Extras (b 4, lb 11, w 5) 20
Total (3 wickets) 113

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-15, 2-36, 3-106, 4-121, 5-154, 6-164 (by Snell 15-21-0 w; 16-22-0 w; 17-23-0 w; 18-24-0 w; 19-25-0 w; 20-26-0 w; 21-27-0 w; 22-28-0 w; 23-29-0 w; 24-30-0 w; 25-31-0 w; 26-32-0 w; 27-33-0 w; 28-34-0 w; 29-35-0 w; 30-36-0 w; 31-37-0 w; 32-38-0 w; 33-39-0 w; 34-40-0 w; 35-41-0 w; 36-42-0 w; 37-43-0 w; 38-44-0 w; 39-45-0 w; 40-46-0 w; 41-47-0 w; 42-48-0 w; 43-49-0 w; 44-50-0 w; 45-51-0 w; 46-52-0 w; 47-53-0 w; 48-54-0 w; 49-55-0 w; 50-56-0 w; 51-57-0 w; 52-58-0 w; 53-59-0 w; 54-60-0 w; 55-61-0 w; 56-62-0 w; 57-63-0 w; 58-64-0 w; 59-65-0 w; 60-66-0 w; 61-67-0 w; 62-68-0 w; 63-69-0 w; 64-70-0 w; 65-71-0 w; 66-72-0 w; 67-73-0 w; 68-74-0 w; 69-75-0 w; 70-76-0 w; 71-77-0 w; 72-78-0 w; 73-79-0 w; 74-80-0 w; 75-81-0 w; 76-82-0 w; 77-83-0 w; 78-84-0 w; 79-85-0 w; 80-86-0 w; 81-87-0 w; 82-88-0 w; 83-89-0 w; 84-90-0 w; 85-91-0 w; 86-92-0 w; 87-93-0 w; 88-94-0 w; 89-95-0 w; 90-96-0 w; 91-97-0 w; 92-98-0 w; 93-99-0 w; 94-100-0 w; 95-101-0 w; 96-102-0 w; 97-103-0 w; 98-104-0 w; 99-105-0 w; 100-106-0 w; 101-107-0 w; 102-108-0 w; 103-109-0 w; 104-110-0 w; 105-111-0 w; 106-112-0 w; 107-113-0 w; 108-114-0 w; 109-115-0 w; 110-116-0 w; 111-117-0 w; 112-118-0 w; 113-119-0 w; 114-120-0 w; 115-121-0 w; 116-122-0 w; 117-123-0 w; 118-124-0 w; 119-125-0 w; 120-126-0 w; 121-127-0 w; 122-128-0 w; 123-129-0 w; 124-130-0 w; 125-131-0 w; 126-132-0 w; 127-133-0 w; 128-134-0 w; 129-135-0 w; 130-136-0 w; 131-137-0 w; 132-138-0 w; 133-139-0 w; 134-140-0 w; 135-141-0 w; 136-142-0 w; 137-143-0 w; 138-144-0 w; 139-145-0 w; 140-146-0 w; 141-147-0 w; 142-148-0 w; 143-149-0 w; 144-150-0 w; 145-151-0 w; 146-152-0 w; 147-153-0 w; 148-154-0 w; 149-155-0 w; 150-156-0 w; 151-157-0 w; 152-158-0 w; 153-159-0 w; 154-160-0 w; 155-161-0 w; 156-162-0 w; 157-163-0 w; 158-164-0 w; 159-165-0 w; 160-166-0 w; 161-167-0 w; 162-168-0 w; 163-169-0 w; 164-170-0 w; 165-171-0 w; 166-172-0 w; 167-173-0 w; 168-174-0 w; 169-175-0 w; 170-176-0 w; 171-177-0 w; 172-178-0 w; 173-179-0 w; 174-180-0 w; 175-181-0 w; 176-182-0 w; 177-183-0 w; 178-184-0 w; 179-185-0 w; 180-186-0 w; 181-187-0 w; 182-188-0 w; 183-189-0 w; 184-190-0 w; 185-191-0 w; 186-192-0 w; 187-193-0 w; 188-194-0 w; 189-195-0 w; 190-196-0 w; 191-197-0 w; 192-198-0 w; 193-199-0 w; 194-200-0 w; 195-201-0 w; 196-202-0 w; 197-203-0 w; 198-204-0 w; 199-205-0 w; 200-206-0 w; 201-207-0 w; 202-208-0 w; 203-209-0 w; 204-210-0 w; 205-211-0 w; 206-212-0 w; 207-213-0 w; 208-214-0 w; 209-215-0 w; 210-216-0 w; 211-217-0 w; 212-218-0 w; 213-219-0 w; 214-220-0 w; 215-221-0 w; 216-222-0 w; 217-223-0 w; 218-224-0 w; 219-225-0 w; 220-226-0 w; 221-227-0 w; 222-228-0 w; 223-229-0 w; 224-230-0 w; 225-231-0 w; 226-232-0 w; 227-233-0 w; 228-234-0 w; 229-235-0 w; 230-236-0 w; 231-237-0 w; 232-238-0 w; 233-239-0 w; 234-240-0 w; 235-241-0 w; 236-242-0 w; 237-243-0 w; 238-244-0 w; 239-245-0 w; 240-246-0 w; 241-247-0 w; 242-248-0 w; 243-249-0 w; 244-250-0 w; 245-251-0 w; 246-252-0 w; 247-253-0 w; 248-254-0 w; 249-255-0 w; 250-256-0 w; 251-257-0 w; 252-258-0 w; 253-259-0 w; 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